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Simon Jenkins PAGE 20



New case denounced as vendetta

Defiant Kevin Maxwell faces second trial

By JON ASHWORTH AND FRANCES GIBB

KEVIN MAXWELL faced the prospect of another long trial yesterday when the Serious Fraud Office announced that it was pressing ahead with further charges against him.

The decision came seven days after his acquittal on charges of conspiracy to defraud pensioners of shares worth £122 million, and he immediately denounced it as "political". Mr Maxwell's barrister described it as an outrage, and said he would be taken to have the case thrown out.

No further action will be taken against Mr Maxwell's elder brother, Ian, but Larry Trachtenberg, who was acquitted with the brothers last week after an eight-month hearing, will be put on trial again. Mr Maxwell and Mr Trachtenberg will be joined in the dock by Albert Fuller, former head of the Maxwell treasury department, and Michael Stoney, a former Maxwell company director.

The SFO's decision to proceed was announced in the Old Bailey courtroom used for the previous hearing and afterwards. Kevin Maxwell said: "I believe I am the victim of a political decision taken by politicians in the run-up to a general election. I do not think the interests of justice will be served by a second trial."

He was supported by his wife Pandora, who accused the SFO of running a vendetta against him. She branded the decision "the last lash of the dragon's tail", and called for a public protest. "I am hoping the public will object to the spending of another £10 million when they could be putting the Newbury bypass underground for that much."

The Attorney General denied the claims of political

motivation, however, saying the decision was taken by the director of the Serious Fraud Office in consultation with counsel and the Government's law officers. Sir Ivan Lawrence, QC, Conservative chairman of the Commons home affairs select committee, described the suggestion as arrant nonsense. He said the Attorney General would have approved the prosecution, but the decision would have been taken purely on legal grounds.

The decision to continue with the case was made just before yesterday morning's court hearing. Richard Lissack, for the prosecution, said it had been taken at the last minute after "palinstaking" reflection, but there were ill-tempered exchanges in court as defence counsel complained that they had been left no time to consider their response.

Alun Jones, QC, for Kevin Maxwell, described the continued prosecution as oppressive and "nothing less than an outrage". He argued that the complexity of the case meant that a second trial might not start until next January and could last nine months, plac-



Maxwell: "I am victim of political decision"

The investigation into the collapse of the late Robert Maxwell's empire cost some £11 million and the final bill of the first trial has been estimated at up to £30 million. But only two of ten original counts were considered at that trial in

Continued on page 2, col 6

Melvyn Markus, page 26

Britain freezes in Arctic winds

By STEPHEN FARRELL

SUB-ZERO temperatures and Arctic winds caused hundreds of accidents and closed roads across the country yesterday, and are set to disrupt the weekend's sporting fixtures.

Weather centres reported

temperatures of -6C (21.2F) and 45mph winds, causing a wind chill factor of -17C (1.4F). The worst-affected areas were south Wales and northern England, where thousands of homes were hit by power cuts, and hundreds of accidents occurred where snow had settled on patches of black ice.

In the Rhymney Valley, emergency soup kitchens were set up and helicopters flew mobile generators into parts of Mid-Glamorgan and Gwent. Welsh Water was forced to deliver bottled supplies to villages near Merthyr Tydfil after reservoir pumps failed. "These have been freak conditions," a spokesman said.

In Sussex, a 26-year-old woman died when the car she was travelling in skidded on ice at Pyecombe, near Haywards Heath, and crashed into a garage forecourt, destroying several petrol pumps.

The London Weather Centre said worse weather is on the way. "We are expecting the same situation we had on New Year's Eve, when rain froze as it hit the ground."

Forecast, page 24

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IAN CHOSE THE LIGHTS OUT OPTION ON VIRGIN UPPER CLASS BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, HAD DRUNK TOO MANY COFFEES.

Upper Class We offer a sleep-suit, duvet, pillow, lights out in the cabin, and decaffeinated coffee. Call 01293 747 500 or see your travel agent. virgin atlantic



The new Bishop of London, the Right Rev Richard Chartres, in the London Cope, which was made for Bishop Gerald Ellison and depicts several London churches, during his enthronement at St Paul's Cathedral yesterday. Page 10

Forte facing Footsie axe

Forte, the food and hotels group taken over by Granada, faces the ignominy of being replaced in the FT-SE index of the leading 100 companies next week by Mercury Asset Management.

The fund management company helped to seal Forte's fate by publicly accepting the £3.8 billion Granada bid. Page 25

Inmates' payout

Seven prisoners who claimed they were left mentally traumatised by the Strangeways jail riots six years ago have reached out-of-court cash settlements of almost £5,000 each from the Home Office. Page 3

Duchess sued over £100,000 loan

By BILL FROST

THE Duchess of York faced fresh embarrassment over her finances yesterday as a former friend issued a High Court writ demanding that she repay a £100,000 loan.

Lily Rathan Mahani, an Indian-born society hostess, is said to have lent the Duchess the money for a holiday in France two years ago. She wants the money returned with interest. It is thought to be the first time a member of the Royal Family has been faced with a High Court hearing over an alleged debt. The writ was filed on Thursday while the Duchess, who is thought to be up to £3 million in debt, was dining at a London restaurant.

Mrs Mahani, 38, claimed

that she lent the Duchess the money in the summer of 1994 so that she could take a six-week break on the Côte d'Azur with her daughters, Princess

Beatrice and Princess Eugenie, some of her staff and a sherpa mountain guide she met in the Himalayas. The Duchess is said to have repaid only about £5,000.

Last week, when news of the Duchess's debts was made public, Buckingham Palace made plain that the Queen would no longer pay her daughter-in-law's creditors. However, the Duchess apparently has clinched a lucrative deal with Ray Chambers, an American businessman, on marketing Budge the Helicopter, the cartoon character she created.

In addition, she has received a £650,000 offer from the CBS TV network in the United States to host a chat show. A

source close to the Duchess indicated last night, however, that she was "highly unlikely to relinquish herself as a television performer now or at any time".

The writ, issued at 3.15pm on Thursday against the Duchess, of Kingsbourne House, Wentworth, Surrey, claims that Mrs Mahani lent the Duchess £100,000, in or about August 1994, on terms that the loan would be repaid on demand or within a reasonable period. It claims that repayment was demanded in late February last year.

The writ says that, in part, payment, the Duchess gave a cheque, dated March 2 last year, for £5,000 and the bal-

Continued on page 2, col 3

Planning to see a show or a film, an exhibition or a concert? *The Times* critics select the best entertainment

Benedict Nightingale

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Read Wilde's play, and you might conclude it is a melodrama with epigrams artificially inserted in the creakier gaps. But Peter Hall's production is a major piece of dramatic reclamation. With Anna Carteret, David Yelland, Penny Downie and (especially) a Wilde-looking Martin Shaw seamlessly in control, there is humanity, humour and timely truth in the tale of the rising politician threatened both by the appearance of the indiscreet letter he wrote in his youth and by his wife's unforgiving morality. *Theatre Royal, Haymarket, London SW1 (0171-930 8800). Evenings: Mon to Sat, 7.45pm; matinees: Wed and Sat, 3pm. £5.*

AN INSPECTOR CALLS Why has a revival of a neatly carpeted thriller written 50 years ago and earnestly preaching socialism won almost every award in London, as well as several in New York? Why bother at all with J.B. Priestley's tale of a respectable family's destruction of an innocent girl? Because Stephen Daldry's superbly imaginative direction and Ian MacNeil's wonderfully evocative set transform it into a grand, gripping denunciation of the 20th-century's deadliest sins. *Garrick, Charing Cross Road, London WC2 (0171-494 5025). Evenings: Mon to Fri, 7.45pm; matinees: Sat, 8.15pm; matinees: Wed, 2.30pm, Sat, 5pm.*

Clive Davis

JACKY TERRASSON His eponymous Blue Note debut found a place in many of the shortlists as the critics looked back on the outstanding records of 1995. A packish virtuoso of Franco-American origin, he has the potential to become the most versatile and accomplished pianist since the controversial Keith Jarrett. Muscular yet poetic, he can slip into a funky backbeat on *I Love Paris*, sprinkle Debussy-esque harmonies on *Hommage à Lili Boulanger* and leap into quicksilver Bud Powell mode at a moment's notice. *Jazz Café, Parkway, London NW1 (0171-344 0044), Thur Feb 1, 9pm.*

BARBARA COOK/STEVE ROSS Barbara Cook's waltz through Broadway and Tin Pan Alley history is currently one of London's best kept secrets. Do not miss her final week. Wally Harper's piano arrangements are as sumptuous as a full orchestra's, and Cook's subtle vocals lift even the more obscure numbers firmly into the major league. A favourite at the Algonquin and other Manhattan salons, the Cole Porter devotee Steve Ross comes to town with another outstanding sack of vintage songs. He will be followed on-stage, later in the evening, by Patricia Hodge and Sheridan Morley, presenting their tribute to Gertrude Lawrence and Jack Buchanan. *Cook's Cafè Royal, Regent St, London W1 (0171-437 9000), tonight, Tues to Sat, 9.15pm.*

RE: Pizza on the Park Knightsbridge, London SW1 (0171-235 5273). Mon 29 to Sat 24 Feb, 9.15pm; (Hodge and Morley, 11.15pm).

Rodney Milnes

SAMSON ET DALILA There is a slightly improvised feel to the Royal Opera's new year programme, with the management bobbing and weaving through cancelled productions and changes

Humanity and humour: Penny Downie, Dulcie Gray and Anna Carteret star in Peter Hall's timely production of Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*

of cast, but the unplanned revival of Saint-Saëns' grand opera is all gain. Sidney Nolan's sumptuously colourful decor, Eliot Moshinsky's grown-up production and David Bintley's rather saucy Bacchanale – not to mention "Softly awakes my heart" – all add up to a thumping good evening out. *The Greek*, mezzo Markella Hatzianou, sings the tempress. Jose Cura is the prophet, and the expert Jacobs Delacote conducts. *Royal Opera House, Bow St, London WC2 (0171-304 4000), Tues 20 Feb, 7.30pm. £5.*

THE MAGIC FLUTE There are few more uplifting experiences than a really good performance of Mozart's fairy-tale morality, and the English National Opera fields a strong team for the latest revival of Nicholas Hytner's first staging. Alexander Sander's stylish conducting is the perfect springboard for exceptional singing from Janice Watson and fan Bosridge as the very juvenile leads, Peter Snipp as the birdcatcher and John Connell as – in George Bernard Shaw's words – the voice of God. All this, and you can hear the words too. *Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (0171-632 8300), Wed 21, Fri 2, 7.30pm. £5.*

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FRANK BLACK Joining up the musical dots from Nirvana to Green Day, yet still wildly different to both, Frank Black is here to promote *The Cult of Ray*, his third solo album since the demise of the Pixies. A performer of wit and substance, Black remains one of the perennial heavy hitters of American rock. *SFX, Dublin (00353 284 1747), Jan 19.*

THE FIELDS OF AMBROSIA American musical with book and lyrics by Jon Higgins and who also stars as a estate executive who falls in love with the woman not to be his "ambrosia". *Music Box, 100 New Bond St, London W1 (0171-369 1466). Now previewing, evenings Jan 20, 7.45pm; mat. Sat, 8pm. Open Jan 31, 7.30pm. £5.*

LES ENFANTS DU PARADIS Helen McCrory, Joseph Fiennes, Rupert Graves and James D'Arcy play the parents and grandparents of the same mother, in Simon Callow's production of the classic French film. *Short season only*. *Strand, EC2 (0171-335 8891). Now previewing, evenings Jan 20, 7.15pm; mat today, 8pm. Open Jan 30, 7pm. £5.*

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Strangeways seven are 'paid off'

Prisoners stressed by jail riot receive £5,000 settlements

BY KATE ALDERSON

SEVEN prisoners claiming to have been mentally traumatised by the Strangeways jail riots six years ago have received out-of-court settlements with the Home Office of almost £5,000 each.

In what are believed to be the first cases of their kind, the seven former inmates launched claims for damages alleging they suffered post-traumatic stress disorder. A Prison Service spokesman confirmed yesterday that all seven claims had been settled.

However, the Home Office has not accepted liability and the awards have been made because of the huge cost to the taxpayer of taking the cases to court. A spokesman said: "After counsel's advice and careful consideration it was decided to settle the cases on the grounds of costs. The stress has not been proved."

The Prison Service spokesman said that an ex-gratia payment had also been made to a prison officer, but he could not reveal details.

The riot at the Manchester jail, which began in April 1990, lasted for 25 days and resulted in the death of one prison officer. Another prison officer received injuries that may have contributed to his

death. Six prisoners were charged with murder and ten with rioting.

Politicians yesterday condemned the Home Office decision to settle. Prison officers said it was an insult to those who worked in Strangeways during the riot who have received no compensation.

Bob Letherland, the Labour MP whose Manchester Central constituency includes Strangeways, said: "My heart goes out to all of them. The Home Office has not even rewarded them with a paltry medal, let alone thousands in compensation."

An official of the Prison Officer's Association (POA) said the Home Office payments could prompt other prisoners to "jump on the bandwagon" and for prisons' staff to reconsider launching actions. However, the Home Office said claims for damages had to be lodged within three years of any incident.

Terence Jeggo, 27, from Manchester, is a former inmate who has received £4,500 over his claim that he suffered a personality change during the riots. He alleged the Prison Service breached its duty of care to him as a prisoner and that the prison authorities

should have known that a riot was imminent and taken steps to prevent it.

Jeggo, in Strangeways for stabbing a man, was involved in an unsuccessful attempt to rescue two prisoners from a burning cell at the height of the riot. He claimed he suffered post-traumatic stress disorder as a result. His case was due to go before a 12-week hearing at Manchester High Court.

Trevor Ward, a solicitor acting for Jeggo, said: "He suffered anxiety and depression which led to the breakdown of a long-term relationship with the mother of his children." Mr Ward described the payment as reasonable, adding there was evidence that Jeggo suffered psychological trauma.

Sir Ivan Lawrence, chairman of the House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, said damages claims were getting out of hand. "As with claims by IRA terrorists, wives of appalling criminals and other absurd cases that have recently been emerging, most people will be extremely irritated by this."

Dawn Brumley, of Justice For Victims, described the payments as a joke. "They say they are suffering stress caused by the riot, but what about the stress and pain caused to the victims and families of victims by their actions?"

John Sutcliffe, assistant secretary of the POA, said his members had made claims to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board after riots at eight prisons, including Strangeways, in 1990. Sixty-five claims were made to the board. Forty related to physical injuries, all of which had been settled, and 25 involved compensation for post-traumatic stress disorder, three of which were outstanding. Payments to officers for stress range from £2,500 to £7,500.



Rioting prisoners took to the roof during the disturbance at Strangeways in the spring of 1990

Rock 'n' roll legend to sue theatre over his life story

BY ANDREW PIERCE

THE world premiere of a play about Jerry Lee Lewis at a provincial theatre is at the centre of a legal dispute with the flamboyant musician's family.

Whole Lotta Shakin', is due to open at the Belgrave Theatre, Coventry, on Tuesday.

But Lewis, the six-times married pioneer of rock-and-roll, has objected to the theatre's claims that the play had received his family's blessing.

The "warts and all" story was written by Todd Ristau, who spent several months in Memphis, where the singer lives, talking to relatives and friends. It has been tipped for a West End run.

Lewis, 59, whose hits included *Great Balls of Fire*, has spent most of his career in controversy. His 1958 tour of Britain was disrupted by protests against his marriage to his 13-year-old cousin. He was a drug addict for more than 20 years, and was arrested for trying to drive through Elvis Presley's locked gates with a loaded gun. He has also been pursued for millions of dollars in unpaid tax.

The unauthorised musical,

which takes its name from one of the singer's biggest hits, is due to run for a month. It tells the story of his rise to fame at the age of 21 and charts how he fell from glory because of the outrage over his 13-year-old bride. At least four of his six wives will feature in the show.

David Monypenny, Lewis's lawyer, said last night: "This play is being produced without the authority of Jerry Lee Lewis. We are adamantly opposed to it and will take all steps necessary to prevent this

production opening."

Charles White, official biographer of Lewis, said: "I spoke to one of Jerry's sisters last night. She is terribly upset, as is Jerry. I have a copy of the script which is going to lawyers."

In a press release the theatre said: "The production has been developed with full co-operation of the Lewis family."

The theatre is delighted by

the controversy. "We have had calls from all over the country," Fiona Williams, public relations manager, said. "We have never even hinted that Jerry Lee Lewis is involved. Our lawyers have checked the script. We have not labelled anyone or plagiarised anyone. So far we have not received any injunctions. It is true that we have not had authority from Jerry Lee Lewis. We don't need it. The show is definitely going on."

Ms Williams added: "We

rather hope Jerry Lee Lewis

may fly over as well as our

guest-of-honour."

Not all the family objects.

Frankie Jean, one of the

musician's sisters, is expected

at the opening night. The show stars

Billy Geraghty, who played

Buddy Holly in the West End.

Jerry Lee Lewis: said to be upset by the show

Scarborough fields mayor in bid for Bulgarian glory

BY PAUL WILKINSON

TWO rival soccer towns are locked in an off-the-field battle over who is to look after the Bulgarian football team when it plays in the European Championship this summer.

Apart from the civic and sporting prestige of hosting the entourage, there is also the matter of the £5 million which 5,000 Bulgarian fans are expected to spend next June when they watch Bulgaria's opening matches in Newcastle and Leeds.

On one side is Darlington, Co Durham, currently sixth in Division 3. Once the grimy birthplace of the railway industry, it now claims to be a centre for tourism. It is pitted against Scarborough, the Victorian spa town, which at present is the penultimate

side in the Football League. Until the start of this month Darlington believed it had the match in the bag. A team agent had booked rooms at a country house hotel and the rugby club had offered its ground for training.

But then Don Robinson, a Scarborough businessman who was chairman of the town's soccer club and has hotel interests in Bulgaria, stepped in with a late equaliser. Through his contacts, officials of the Bulgarian Football Union were offered an alternative venue.

John Williams, leader of Darlington council, tackled the move by offering a tour of his area next month to Bulgarian officials. Scarborough believes, however, that it scored a last-minute winner when last weekend, it

Dr Joe Riley observes a bee with the 16mm radar antenna glued to its back



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A HOT DAY AND A HOT RICK can make a Jack Daniel's ricker behave in strange ways.

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JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY



Scientists create tiny antenna to keep eye on bees

BY MICHAEL HORNSBY, COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH scientists have invented the world's smallest radar antenna to track bees and other low-flying insects.

The device could improve the efficiency of bee-keeping and help to combat the tsetse fly, carrier of sleeping sickness in central and southern Africa.

The antenna, which weighs three milligrams and is 16 millimetres high, is glued to the back of the bees. Field trials show the creatures can fly normally with the extra load but have some difficulty entering their hives.

Radar has already been used to monitor high-flying insects, but their ground-hugging counterparts could not be tracked because of the signals returned from plants and other objects.

With the aid of a £65,000 grant from the Overseas Development Administration, Joe Riley and his colleagues at the radar unit of the Natural Resources Institute at Malvern, Hereford and Worcester, devised the antenna, technically known as a harmonic generating tag, to get

the key to the device's tiny

size is its ability to pick up the operating power it needs from the incoming signals, so no on-board battery is required.

The next step is to develop an antenna weighing no more than one milligram capable of being attached to tsetse flies, which themselves weigh only between five and 10 milligrams. Such a device could be ready for field trials next year.

Dr Riley and his team are working at the request of scientists in Zimbabwe who think the radar tag will enable them to control tsetse flies more effectively and without the environmental damage caused by insecticides.

The Zimbabweans are already using decoys to trap the bloodsucking flies. Dr Riley said: "Rods are placed in fields and covered with black cloth impregnated with the odour of an ox and also the insecticide. But it is a bit hit-and-miss. The aim is to use the radar tags to find out the insects' precise flight patterns, making it possible to site the decoy rods in places where they will catch most flies."

Bees were originally chosen simply because they provided a good model on which to test the antenna. Entomologists now think the tags could also be used to improve knowledge of the foraging and pollinating habits of bees, enabling hives to be sited more effectively and perhaps throwing light on the decline of the wild bumble bee.

Voice denies irresponsible reporting ahead of Brixton police station protest

Condon accuses black newspaper of fuelling riots

BY STEWART TENDERLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

THE Metropolitan Police Commissioner has accused Britain's leading black newspaper of helping to incite the riots in Brixton, south London, last month.

Sir Paul Condon said yesterday that *The Voice* had been "dangerously irresponsible" in its coverage of the case of Wayne Douglas, the 26-year-old black burglar whose death after an arrest was a major factor in the riots. Speaking during a radio interview, Sir Paul said he thought the newspaper had "fuelled discontent".

Before the disturbances, *The Voice* printed a front-page report quoting an unnamed witness who alleged that police had used excessive force in arresting Douglas. The paper also featured prominently a picture of Douglas and another of an array of recently issued long batons, which police confirmed were used by officers during the arrest. The article was headed "Tell us the truth".

The weekly newspaper, which sells 45,000 copies and reaches about 280,000 readers mainly in London and the South East, issued a statement yesterday strongly defending its coverage. It said: "We are standing by our story. The story was not inflammatory. We are a responsible newspaper and we look at the issues which affect the black

community and our rights. We have a sworn affidavit from a witness to the events which took place surrounding the death of Wayne Douglas. Our witness is prepared to appear in court."

Onye Wambu, deputy editor and news editor, said: "We reported the truth. We don't think our reporting was inflammatory. We would rather deal with real problems between the black community and the police than shoot the messenger."

Only this week, he said, an inquest jury in London had raised fresh questions over the treatment of black suspects by returning a verdict of unlawful killing on Oluwashijibomi Lapite, who died while being arrested.

In his interview with London News radio, Sir Paul said: "In many ways it's a tragedy that one of the most important papers in the area chooses an editorial line which I think is dangerously confrontational. They have printed alleged eyewitness accounts that were never substantiated. I have been disappointed because *The Voice* should be an influential paper within the black community and recently it's been a wildly irresponsible newspaper."

The Commissioner criticised the way *The Voice* dealt with Douglas's death in the paper.

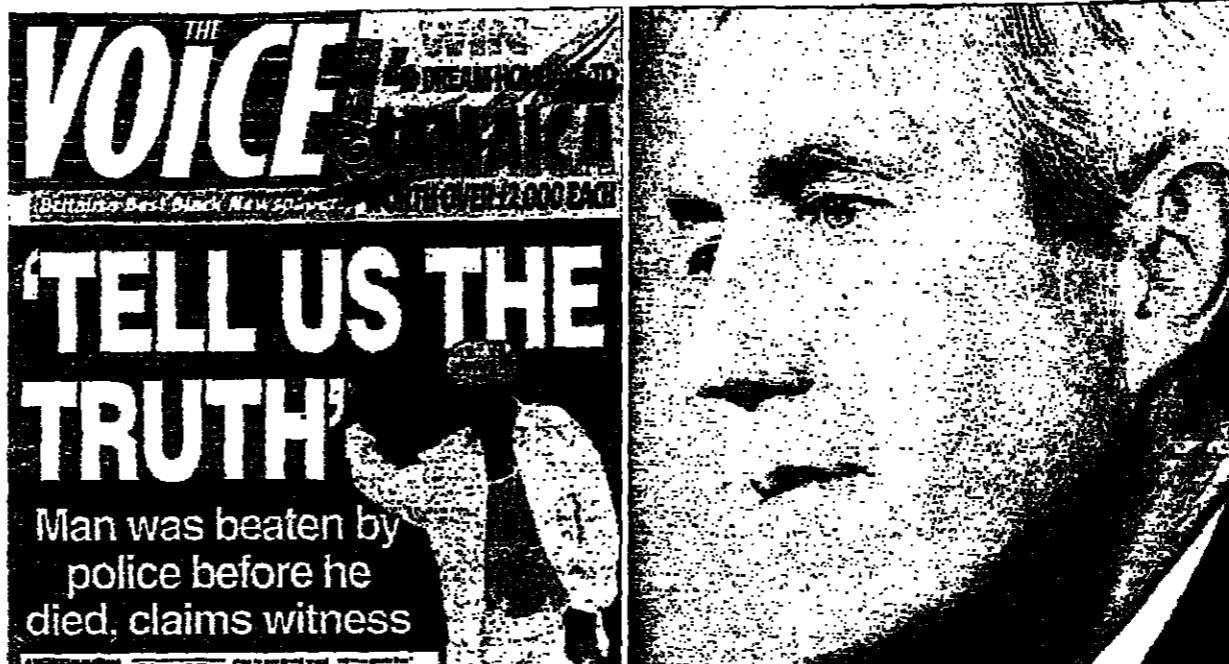
weeks before a protest outside Brixton police station erupted into a riot. He said: "They printed allegations which were, I think, unnecessarily inflammatory, that had no substance."

"I'm not prejudging the outcome of an independent inquiry, but to the best of my knowledge the wild accusations that were made have not been substantiated in any way, shape or form." He dismissed as "cobblers" a suggestion that there was a growing division between the police force and the community it served, or that police officers were unrepresentative of the community.

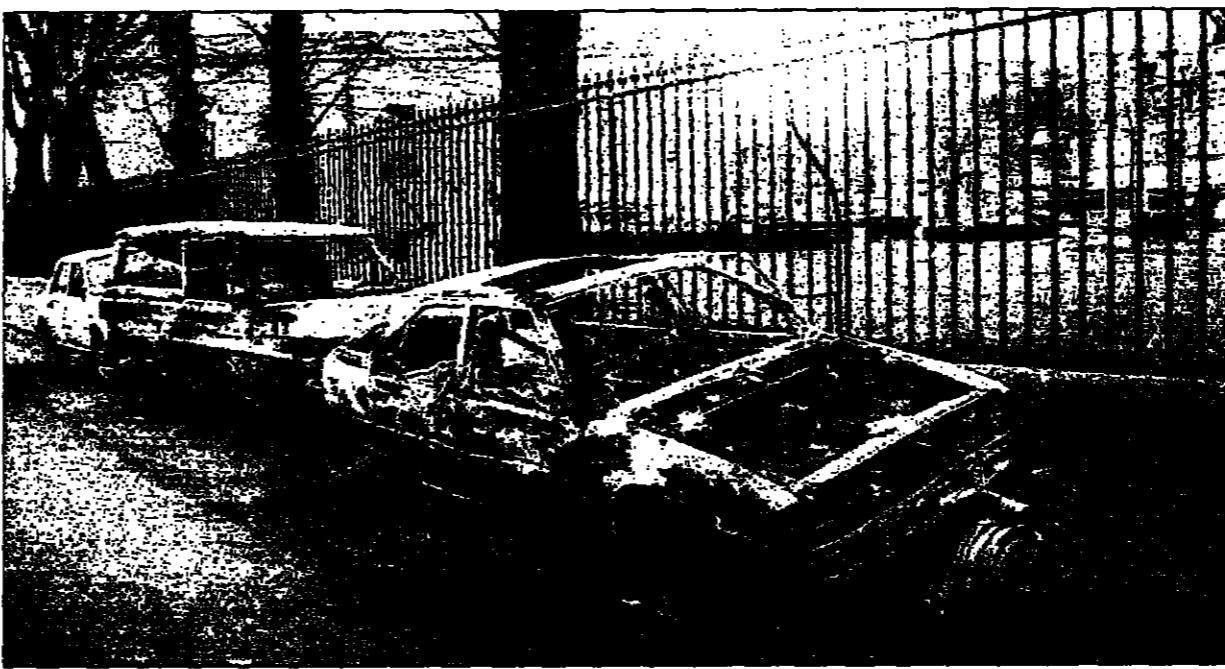
The newspaper is likely to mount a vigorous response to the attack, and Mr Wambu said black leaders and MPs had already voiced their support.

After the riots, Sir Paul condemned speakers at the protest, including Rudi Narayan, the former barrister, for making allegedly inflammatory speeches and launched a police investigation as to whether the comments broke the law on incitement. A report has yet to go to the Crown Prosecution Service.

Last year, Sir Paul upset the black community in London by launching an operation against crime which he said predominantly involved black youths.



Coverage of the death of Wayne Douglas by *The Voice* was condemned by Sir Paul Condon, right, as irresponsible. He said it helped to incite last month's riots in Brixton that resulted in ransacked shops and burnt-out cars



MPs rush through Bill to punish cruelty to wild animals

By ALICE THOMSON

ACTS of cruelty to hedgehogs, badgers and frogs will soon be a criminal offence punishable by jail, after a backbench Bill was rushed through the Commons yesterday.

MPs from all sides supported the Wild Mammals (Protection) Bill, which aims to protect wild animals against

violence such as stabbing, burning, kicking, stoning, crushing, drowning and mutilation. Pets such as hamsters, rats and rabbits are already protected from "barbarous treatment" under 1911 legislation.

The Bill has received support from the pro-hunting lobbies as it does not legislate against fox-hunting, stalking, coursing, shooting, fishing or the use of

wire snares but reminded MPs that under a Labour Government there would be a free vote on the abolition of fox-hunting, hare-coursing and stag-hunting.

He told MPs: "The reality is that if I brought such a Bill before this House it would have had little chance at this time to become law. It had to be in the interests of the

animal kingdom that I proceeded." Last year a contentious backbench Bill put forward by John McFall, Labour MP for Dumbarton, to outlaw some field sports was quietly stifled by the Government by being given no time to proceed.

Mr Meale cited recent cases where the Bill would have helped to prosecute hooligans who had burnt alive a fox, nailed a vixen to a tree, dragged a fox behind a motorcycle, kicked a hedgehog against a wall, impaled a hare with a three-foot metal spike and crushed another hedgehog by taking turns to jump onto a concrete slab placed on top of the animal.

He said that welfare organisations had dossiers of more than 10,000 such incidents every year which they had been unable to stop.

Tom Sackville, the junior

MP for Blandford, congratulated Labour MPs for not trying to force a debate on fox-hunting. Dr Charles Goodson-Wixes, chairman of the British Field Sports Society, said: "Real progress has been made because all of us who genuinely care about animal welfare were prepared to put aside our differences, sit down and identify the common ground represented in this Bill."

Sir John Cope, Tory MP for Northavon, said Mr Meale had been "very sensible" to limit the Bill's objectives.

The Bill is expected to have a speedy passage in the Lords and will almost certainly reach the Statute Book.

Home Office minister said:

"It is a sad reflection on our society that such a Bill should be necessary, that there is a despicable minority of people who are prepared to commit such acts."

Eric Clarke, Labour MP for Midlothian, said he received

many letters deplored cruelty to animals. "It is mainly young people who write. They are telling us that there is a demand, a need, for this particular type of legislation."

The pro-blood-sport lobby

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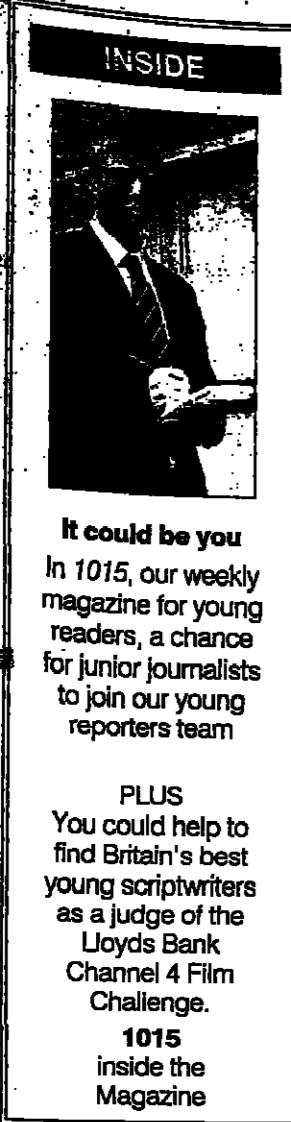
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Sir John Cope, Tory MP for



More than 1,100 plates removed from collections across the country

Library thief plundered rare and precious books

BY MICHAEL HORNSBY

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inside the Magazine

access, and closer supervision are among security measures designed to thwart similar raids in the future.

Martin Hicks, for the prosecution, said 439 plates had been located and either recovered or their eventual destination identified, amounting to about 38 per cent of the items lost. Bellwood, from Leeds, admitted 12 sample counts of theft and damaging property.

Mr Hicks told the court: "Various outlets have been traced. Cash, cheque or swap transactions took place, and from there it is suggested he has had a proven benefit of something in the order of £57,000."

He added that the charges Bellwood had admitted "represent the substantial part of the criminality on the part of the defendant, but they are not exclusive."

Bellwood admitted stealing seven prints from *The Sporting Garland* by Cecil Aldin; four colour prints from *Pictureque Illustrations of the River Wye* by Theodore Henry Field-

ing, both belonging to the British Library; *Famous Cricketers* by Charles W Alcock; and 127 illustrations from six volumes entitled *The Holy Land* by D Roberts from the London Library; 37 colour plates from *Empire's Cricket*, belonging to A C Taylor and Beldam, belonging to Leeds Central Library; and 14 colour plates from 12 *Vanity Fair* magazines belonging to Birmingham Central Library.

Mr Hicks told Judge Motta Singh, QC, that former Christie's auctioneer Anthony Payne estimated the value of the books involved at between £189,000 and £289,000.

Justin Shale, for the defence, claimed that the volumes were worth £100,000 and Bellwood's benefit £16,000. He asked for an eight week adjournment so these matters could be dealt with.

After the judge agreed to continue bail, which bans Bellwood from leaving Leeds as well as entering a library, the barrister told the court that as far as his client was

concerned he "does not wish to see a library again after the problems he has experienced".

After the hearing a spokesman for the British Library said the case had led to the installation of closed-circuit cameras in the past year in areas containing antiquarian books.

The bags of people leaving the library are also checked and regular security patrols maintained to prevent the pilfering of plates.

He said: "We do regard as a top priority taking care of material in the collection so it is available to present and future users. The missing plates from our books have been recovered, thankfully."

"This is part of the nation's heritage. We are making sure it is not easy to plunder material from us in future."

Alan Bell, the London library librarian, said: "Our security has been under review as a result of this case. Access arrangements and supervision have been tightened."



Joseph Bellwood at Southwark Crown Court, where he admitted stealing plates from antiquarian books

Ministers to ban sale of knives to children

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY AND STEWART TENDER

MINISTERS are expected to ban the sale of certain types of knife to the under-16s in an effort to end the weapon-carrying culture among young teenagers.

Kitchen knives, daggers and "survival" weapons are among those most likely to be covered under new laws planned by Michael Howard, the Home Secretary. The move follows the fatal stabbing of a London headmaster last month and a spate of knife attacks by young people. Mr Howard has already announced tougher sentences for anyone convicted of carrying a knife as a weapon.

The proposed ban was announced as MPs debated the Offensive Weapons Bill, introduced by the Tory MP Lady Olga Maitland and supported by the Home Office. Ministers are to consult on how a ban could be introduced and may amend the Bill or introduce separate legislation.

Tim Kirkhope, Home Office Minister, told the Commons: "Young children simply do not need razor-sharp kitchen knives or commando-style daggers and it is hard to justify why they should be able to buy them."

Last week Sir Paul Condon, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, told the Home Affairs Select Committee that he would welcome any restriction on the sale of knives to young people. "There is a growing willingness by young people to carry knives... as part of a street culture," he said.

For many years police have been raising concern about the growing trend among young people to carry weapons. It may be a thin craft knife tucked into a sock, a hunting knife bought from a sports shop or one of the weapons used in martial arts. In 1988 London saw a peak of 2,758 knife offences committed by both adults and young people. By 1993 the figure had fallen to 2,332 but last year it rose again to 2,550.

Investigators have discovered branches of chain stores and small hardware shops prepared to sell knives and axes to children as young as 11 without questions being asked.

Police are, however, more likely to be concerned about the practicalities of enforcing the ban. They feel that the law will have to differentiate between a youth intent on violence and someone using a knife for camping or angling.

Yesterday the Association of Chief Police Officers gave its support to a ban: "The reasoning behind it is logical and understandable."

Novelist's village loses its policeman

BY JOANNA BALE

THE bestselling novelist Jilly Cooper has lost a campaign to keep her village policeman after Gloucestershire police confirmed that he is being moved to a housing estate near by.

Ms Cooper yesterday condemned the plan to relocate PC Malcolm Shute from the Cotswold village of Bisley to a new station on a housing estate in neighbouring Bussage, in what the force believes is a "more effective use of resources".

She described PC Shute, 25, as a "darling friend", and added: "It is madness to take our policeman away. We want to feel safe in our village and have our own policeman, like we have always had. This is just another erosion of traditional village life."

The new station is among 800 new homes on the Manor Farm estate in Bussage, near Stroud. In 1994 Ms Cooper organised a protest against building the estate and threatened to stand in front of bulldozers. She is also campaigning against plans for another 112 houses in the area, claiming that developers are ruining the countryside.

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ACCUMULATOR WINNERS

Mrs A Berry of Chesham, Bucks, was Thursday's winner of a free flight with Virgin Atlantic. A total of 342 readers have won £5 Virgin Store vouchers.

4 17

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Ministers
to ban
Sale of
knives
children

Young children don't want cute little toys — but their parents do, says study

Bear facts reveal the truth behind teddies

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

The evolution of the teddy bear has been determined by the survival of the cutest, a group of psychologists has discovered. Their appeal works on the adults who buy them, but not on the very young children who are expected to cuddle them.

The bear facts have come to light in a study to discover when children begin to display a nurturing instinct. The researchers say that up to the age of six, they would much prefer a more adult-looking bear.

Yet since the first teddy bears were made at the turn of the century, the species has evolved by becoming steadily more infantile. From a long-snouted, long-limbed bear, it has been transformed by redesigns into a cute, snub-nosed, baby-like creature.

Earlier workers in the field of teddy bear evolution have suggested that baby-like bears are preferred because they stimulate "nurturing behaviour" — the desire to cuddle and cosset. But in *Animal Behaviour*, Dr Paul Morris and colleagues from the Department of Psychology at the University of Portsmouth say that the babies who are given teddy bears are far too young to want to nurture them.

"You would think that they would prefer things that would give them nurture, rather than the other way



A century of evolution for a species: from left, bears of 1895, 1903, 1923, 1938, 1955, 1966, 1995 and a modern replica of a 1908 Steiff

around," he says. Tests showed he was right. Four baby-featured and four adult-featured bears were selected and shown to three groups of children: four-year-olds, six-year-olds and eight-year-olds. The bears were arranged in 16

pairs, in which one of the pair had baby features and the other adult features. The children were asked which they preferred.

Among the youngest children, 17 out of 24 preferred the adult-featured bears, but the

preference switched sharply in the older children. Among the six-year-olds, the baby-featured bears were preferred by 21 out of 27, and virtually the same result was reached with the eight-year-olds.

The results suggest, say Dr

Morris and his co-authors, Dr Vasu Reddy and Rebecca Bunting, that the evolution of the teddy bear has not been driven by the infants for whom they are bought, but by the adults who buy them. The

serious point behind the re

search is to try to establish just when, in a growing child, nurturing behaviour begins. The results suggest that this is between the ages of four and six.

"The nice thing about the

study is that it showed incred

ibly consistent results," said Dr Morris. The team also asked the children what they would do if they were given their favourite teddy. The youngest group wanted to play with them; the older groups preferred sleeping with their bears or cuddling them, consistent with the development of nurturing behaviour.

Dr Morris says that the study shows that evolutionary pressures are still influencing current behaviour, but the artificial selection of the teddy market has not led to an improvement in the function of the bear as a companion or comfort to young children.

"Teddy bears are now better at being bought by adults, not better at being cuddled by the young children they are usually bought for," the team concludes.

Dr Morris still has teddy bears of his own and says that people used to tease him about them. "So it's nice to be able to turn teddy bears into an academic study," he says. Other adult fans are said to have included Sir John Betjeman, Donald Campbell — who took his teddy on speed record attempts — and Prince Charles.

The first official teddy was made at the turn of the century by the German manufacturer Steiff, after president Theodore Roosevelt declined to shoot a bear when out hunting. Last year a Steiff bear was sold for £10,000.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Bosnia:
the killing
fields

The 250 men were lined up in rows, then told to go to the edge of the precipice and kneel. Behind them



Jon Swain

was a 60ft slope, then the vertical 1,000ft drop. The gunfire went on for 15 minutes. The men fell into the canyon below ...

Jon Swain on the massacres in Bosnia — News Review, The Sunday Times tomorrow

Man hurt after
'low priority' 999

By PAUL WILKINSON

A MAN who came home to find a stolen car in his garage could be left paralysed after the thieves ran him down in it. Last night the injured man's father blamed the police after they admitted not responding immediately to his initial 999 call. West Yorkshire Police said they had given it a low priority.

Doctors in a specialist spinal unit at Pinderfields Hospital in Wakefield were yesterday still uncertain whether Neil Patrick, 40, an accountant, would lose the use of his legs permanently after the incident on Wednesday. His father Joseph, 69, said: "If the police had come when Neil called them none of this would have happened."

Inspector Sam Sagar, a community liaison officer, said Mr Patrick reported the stolen car at 5.41pm. It was classed as non-urgent. A foot patrol was dispatched at 6.13pm but had not arrived when Mr Patrick made a second call to report the

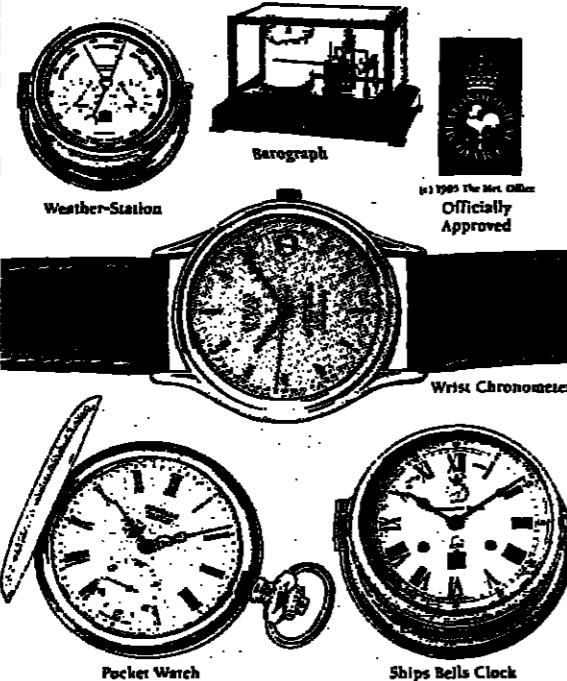
thieves' appearance at 6.37pm. Officers arrived by van six minutes later.

The original call came in as a car that had been abandoned with nobody there and therefore it would be prioritised as non-urgent. Mr Patrick then phoned us again to say six youths had just returned. That upgraded the priority," Mr Sagar said.

Mr Patrick, a divorced father of two from Bradford, used his own car to block in the stolen Vauxhall Cavalier SRI. Later, when he saw the youths push his car out of the way he tried to block their path but the youths drove straight at him. He was knocked in the air, and fell unconscious into the road.

Three months ago Mr Patrick chased off two burglars from a nearby house. Ian White, 38, a neighbour said: "He couldn't stand layabouts and we all looked up to him. He protected our neighbourhood from burglars. I only hope he gets better."

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Church needs strategy for all ages to stop 'decline into religious illiteracy'

New bishop warns of moral vacuum threatening cities

By RUSSELL JENKINS

ACTION is needed to stop Britain's rapid decline into a religiously illiterate society, the new Bishop of London said yesterday. In his enthronement address at St Paul's Cathedral, the Right Rev Richard Chartres said there was an urgent need for the Church to communicate its mission and to challenge a "moral vacuum" threatening inner cities.

He called on Anglicans to exploit the potential of modern communications, and to get out and engage in honest dialogue with contemporaries rather than "retreat into any ghetto".

The message was delivered against a background of controversy. Outside the cathedral, activists for Action for Gay and Lesbian Ordination staged a demonstration in protest at the new bishop's refusal to ordain women as

priests. Bishop Chartres, 48, a father of four and formerly Area Bishop of Stepney, replaces Dr David Hope, who was enthroned as Archbishop of York in December. He is the 132nd Bishop of London — the Church's third most senior job — and a traditionalist and strong family man who has warned of the threat of moral barbarism in cities.

From the pulpit, Bishop Chartres said he agreed with Dr Nicholas Tate, the Government's chief curriculum adviser, who recently expressed concern about moral relativism and the need for young people to receive stronger guidance. "I believe he is right when he suggests that Britain is fast becoming a religiously illiterate society and that in some places we are threatened by a moral vacuum."

It was the Church's job to communicate life, he said. "The Church should be true

to communication. She should not just engage in the business of getting our message across. The Christian Gospel is not just another ideology or problem-solving package, it is a communication of the life of God through Jesus Christ."

The Church of England has the responsibility of equipping itself to communicate in the public realm and to recognise the potential for good in new media of communication.

"True communication with our neighbours involves following Jesus as we see him in dialogue with a great variety of surprising people in the Gospels."

There should be more religious education in schools, he said, but churches ought to have clear educational strategies for every age group.

The new bishop echoed calls for the millennium celebrations to be given a greater spiritual dimension, saying it



Strong family man: the new bishop with wife Caroline and their children

was up to the Church to "remind people whose millennium it will be".

An estimated 2,500 people attended the service, conducted by the Dean of St Paul's, The Very Rev Eric Evans. The Venerable Michael Till, the Archdeacon of Canterbury, officially installed Bishop Chartres into the Episcopal Throne. Cardinal Basil Hume

represented the Roman Catholic Church at the service. Also taking part were Archbishop Gregorios of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain, The Rev Kathleen Richardson, Moderator of the Free Church, and other ecumenical leaders.

Bishop Chartres has gone on record as saying he will work in partnership with the

70 women priests in his diocese but will not ordain women himself.

He has said there will be no witchhunts against homosexual clergy, although he believes strongly that the church allows for either celibacy or lifelong, faithful marriage.

At your service. Weekend, page 3

Credo

The truth that lights the way for all creeds

Geoffrey Rowell

AMONG the minor changes in the Book of Common Prayer, when it was revised in 1662 after the Restoration of Charles II, was the provision of a subtitle for the Feast of the Epiphany: "the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles". That theme contrasted the adoration of the Jewish shepherds at Christmas with the gifts of the Magi representing the homage of the non-Jewish world to the infant Christ. The Feast of Candlemas, or the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, on February 2, picks up both themes with Simeon's *Nunc Dimittis* hailing the child brought to the temple by Mary and Joseph as "the Light to enlighten the Gentiles and the glory of Israel".

Jesus was hailed by Christians as the promised Messiah, the Christ of God. Yet "Messiah" and "Christ" — one a Hebrew word, the other Greek, meaning simply "the anointed one" — are words that belong to the prophetic longing of the Jewish faith, a longing for God's deliverance to be brought about by the coming of God's chosen deliverer.

When the Christian faith spread into the non-Jewish world, Christians were immediately faced with an apologetic task. If Jesus was the revelation of God, then what was his relationship to the philosophy and the religious practices of the non-Jewish world? How was a word like "Christ" to be made sense of to those not nurtured on the Jewish scriptures?

There were those who took a strong, exclusive line. The fierce North African lawyer, Tertullian, asked about the year 200: "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?" The answer, for him, was nothing. Yet, ironically, his own Christian writings betray the influence of Greek Stoic philosophy upon him. Athens did in fact have something to do with Jerusalem, even if he did not admit it.

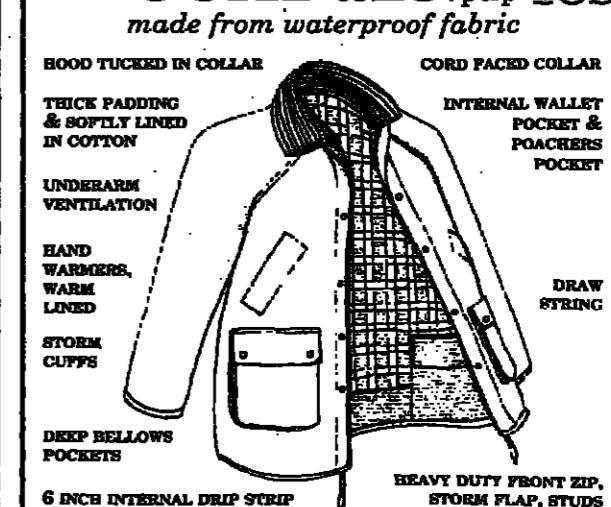
The Christ manifested to the Gentiles is the one who "gathers up the scattered fragments of truth and makes of them a perfect mirror".

□ The Right Reverend Dr Geoffrey Rowell is Bishop of Basingstoke.

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Republic Day plea for clean-up in public life

India's corruption 'threat to national security'

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

INDIA observed Republic Day yesterday in a mood of unprecedented despair.

The chaotic state of politics, the spread of corruption in business and government, and uncertainty about the direction of economic reforms have left the country more divided and troubled than perhaps at any time in 49 years of independence.

President Sharma, in an address on the eve of Republic Day, said corruption, criminalisation of politics, caste discrimination and communal strife threatened national security. In a clear reference to a torrent of corruption scandals shaking the nation, he exhorted "persons holding prominent public offices to be in the forefront in the movement for a cleaner public life".

His appeal — front-page news yesterday — came at a time of national disgust with political leaders who have been slandering each other with abandon in recent weeks

after the implication of members of every national party in a bribery scandal. Only the Communists and regional parties have come out clean.

Three Cabinet ministers

have resigned and been charged with taking money from a businessman: L.K. Advani, a leader of the opposition, resigned from parliament after denying bribery charges; P.V. Narasimha Rao, the Prime Minister, refused opposition claims that he accepted hundreds of thousands of pounds in backhanders; many MPs and several leading state government dignitaries are under pressure to resign for alleged corruption.

The decay of the political system is forcing the Supreme Court increasingly to impose its will on the Government. But for the court's sustained pressure, the Central Bureau of Investigation, a tool of the Prime Minister, would never have pursued the corruption charges, since no national

party was keen on them. The scandal is based on the diaries of a businessman, S.K. Jain, who kept a list of politicians he supposedly bribed. The CBI said he had told police he gave 35 million rupees (£636,000) to the Prime Minister.

So parlous is the state of

government that Biju Patnaik, a senior leader of the left-of-centre Janata Dal, suggested that the army should take over the running of the country.

The President's attack on

communism, the euphemism for Hindu-Muslim conflict, came two days after the pro-Hindu state government in Maharashtra announced it was winding up a three-year investigation into anti-Muslim riots that killed hundreds in December 1992 and January 1993 in Bombay, the state capital. This has disgusted Muslim leaders and further emphasised the religious divide. The inquiry was about to expose the role of Shiv Sena, an extremist party that has

since come to power in Bombay, in the killings.

The economic reforms are

mostly on hold because they are unpopular at the grassroots, but they will be resumed whenever comes to power after the general election, expected in March or April. The increasing rich-poor divide worries many Indians who see it as a recipe for social unrest.

Nobody in the upper

reaches of Government can be

confident that the "trickle-

down" theory of wealth can

work when hundreds of millions play no part in the

economy. Most wealth in India is held by the 3 per cent of the people who speak English and who do well from the

reforms. New outward signs of mega-wealth are superficial

signs of prosperity. Even sus-

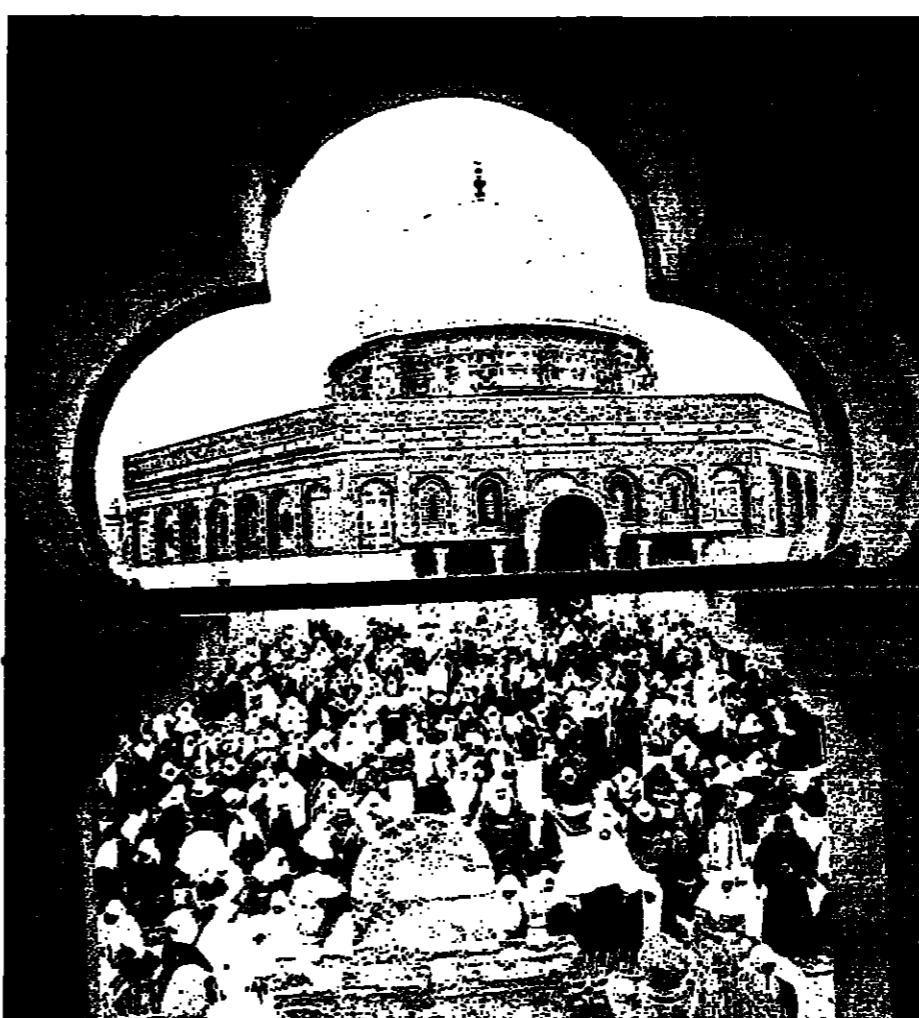
tained economic growth of 7

per cent would take years to

make an impact at the grass-

roots.

Photograph, page 24



Ramadan prayers drew over 160,000 Muslims to al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem yesterday

Self-rule Muslims barred at Ramadan

BY OUR FOREIGN STAFF

ISRAEL banned Palestinians from the Gaza Strip self-rule enclave from entering Jerusalem hours before the first Friday prayers of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan yesterday. Entry for people living in the West Bank was restricted.

Police had been reinforced because of fears that there could be unrest after the prayers at Islam's third holiest shrine, the al-Aqsa mosque, Israel's army radio said.

The move is bound to anger the Palestinian National Authority administering the self-rule areas.

At the same time, an end to blanket conscription of Israelis into the army was sought by the outgoing general in charge of personnel, who told Israel Radio the country had thousands of unnecessary soldiers. Brigadier General Israel Einhorn, who has completed 25 years of service, said about 20 per cent of conscripted soldiers no longer completed the three years of mandatory service.

Venezuela's former Miss Universe seeks presidency

FROM GABRIELLA GAMINI
IN CARACAS



IRENE SÁEZ is beautiful and rich — and hoping to use the charm and fluttering eyelashes that won her the Miss Universe crown in 1981 to become the next President of Venezuela.

The 34-year-old, 6ft former beauty queen could be playing a part in one of her country's feisty soap operas. But her story is real.

Four years ago she left the catwalk to campaign to become mayor of the leafy, middle-class district of Chacao in the capital Caracas, home to two million people. To the surprise of many she won, and carved herself a niche in Venezuela's macho-style politics.

As mayor, Señorita Sáez has cut notorious crime rates and cleaned up streets in her district, now the envy of other areas in the capital where dilapidated tower blocks and shanty towns dominate.

Two weeks ago she ran again and won another mayoral term with a majority of 96 per cent. An independent, she emphasises her distance from old-style parties and, after two victories, plans to run in presidential elections, scheduled to take place in two years' time.

"People need me and if that means that I have to take my political career further, then I am ready for it," she said in her mayoral office, its walls covered in photographs and paintings of herself.

The youngest of six children, Señorita Sáez was born into a well-off middle-class family and, apart from entering beauty contests, she has a political science degree.

Opinion polls put her 15 percentage points ahead of the septuagenarian President Caldera, blamed for the country's economic crisis and volatile political situation.

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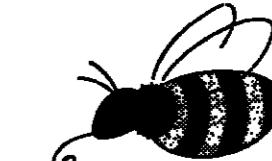
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Farrakhan given \$1bn war chest by Gaddafi

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

TWO of Washington's most stalwart enemies appeared yesterday to have fashioned an unholy alliance to influence American elections and foreign policy as a part of a pledge to spend \$1 billion (£666 million) on "Muslim causes" in the United States.

After a meeting in Tripoli, the Libyan capital, between Louis Farrakhan, the highly controversial black leader of the Nation of Islam, and Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, the Libyan leader, there was said to be strong consensus on funding an effort to unify Muslim groups in America.

"Our confrontation with America was like a fight against a fortress from outside, and today we found a breach to enter into this fortress and confront it," Colonel Gaddafi said in a statement issued by Jana, the official Libyan news agency. He also called for the creation in America of a separate black state with its own army manned by black soldiers from the US armed forces.

Mr Farrakhan, who has gained prominence among black Americans after organising a "Million Man March" on Washington last year to promote black separation, made no response yesterday. Calls to his Chicago headquarters were unanswered.

But he was quoted by Jana



Farrakhan: money to fund Muslim causes

Execution fails to draw jail protesters

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN BLUFFDALE, UTAH

AFTER a life defined by misery, John Albert Taylor failed even in his final hope of embarrassing Utah state with his death by firing squad.

Floodlights were set up for protesters on a hill above Bluffdale's snowbound execution chamber, but none came. The head of Utah's prisons noted with satisfaction that five hunting rifles had proved quicker and no less sanitary than a lethal injection. A journalist who saw the convicted child killer's chest slam back into his chair called it "an honest way to die".

After a day of break and sometimes moving ritual inside the death-watch cell, and intense security outside it, Taylor was collected at 11.45pm on Thursday by 11 guards. Asked by the warden if he had any last words, Taylor, strapped to the chair, said quietly but firmly: "I'd just like to say for my family and friends, as the poem was written, 'remember me, but let me go'. That's it." The shots were fired 45 seconds later.

"All I heard was the last number in the countdown, number three," Craig Wall, a visibly distressed television reporter, said. "Then a very loud boom. I saw his chest heave up, his left hand tighten, relax and tighten again. The cloth tattered on his chest just seemed to disappear. It left me feeling kind of numb."

The mother of Charla King, 11, whom he was convicted of murdering in 1989, did not attend.

After a standard prison lunch Taylor telephoned an ex-girlfriend and was visited by two family members. Complaining that his stomach was "doing flip-flops", he was given an enema before a special late afternoon meal of pizza and Coca-Cola. He wrote a will, prayed, sang hymns, "discussed the after-life", and wept.

Taylor, who was abused by his stepfather, pleaded innocent to Charla's murder. Branded a "remorseless paedophile", he never confessed, although his relatives did not contest his guilt. Among his visitors was a sister, Laura, who gave evidence that he had raped her.

The Libyans' meeting goes back to 1985, when Colonel Gaddafi lent the Nation of Islam \$5 million for various business projects. In the same year, he told members of the radical organisation via satellite that he wanted to help black Americans in an armed struggle to overthrow oppression. Mr Farrakhan is said to have thanked the Libyans politely but rejected his offer of arms.

This week's meeting was seen as the conclusion of Colonel Gaddafi's appeal last year to organise ten million Muslims in America when he said he would spend up to \$1 billion to set up such a lobby.

The Libyan leader, however, is known to exaggerate and in the past has made what can only be described as hallucinatory statements, such as the proposal that his son marry President Clinton's daughter Chelsea to improve relations between Libya and America.

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Faith in the future: Deshun Rinpoche IV, also known as His Holiness Nawang Kunga Tegechen Chokyi Nyima, with his mother, Carolyn Lama, at their Seattle home. The four-year-old, who is believed to be the reincarnation of a revered Buddhist lama, will be travelling to Tibet for ten years of training as a spiritual leader

Rise of Forbes rattles Dole camp

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

THE aura of inevitability that surrounded Robert Dole's bid for the Republican presidential nomination is vanishing fast.

A batch of new polls in key states shows an alarming slip in his support while that of his closest rival, the multimillionaire publisher Steve Forbes, continues steadily to rise.

Mr Dole and Mr Gramm have vastly superior organisations to Mr Forbes's in Iowa, meaning their supporters are much more likely to turn out on the night. The figures nonetheless chilled the Dole camp, which knows that if their man wins less than the 38 per cent he secured against Vice-President Bush in the

November. The latest poll in Iowa, which holds the nation's first seriously contested caucuses in just over two weeks, gave Mr Dole 26 per cent, Mr Forbes 18 and Phil Gramm, Pat Buchanan and Lamar Alexander seven each.

Mr Dole and Mr Gramm have vastly superior organisations to Mr Forbes's in Iowa, meaning their supporters are much more likely to turn out on the night. The figures nonetheless chilled the Dole camp, which knows that if their man wins less than the 38 per cent he secured against Vice-President Bush in the

1988 caucuses, he will be an extremely weak and vulnerable frontrunner.

Polls in New Hampshire, which holds the first primary one week later, are just as unnerving. One gave Mr Dole 30 per cent, Mr Forbes 20 and Mr Buchanan and Mr Gramm ten each. A second gave Mr Dole 36 per cent, Mr Forbes 20, Mr Buchanan 12 and Mr Alexander ten.

Mr Dole had hoped to score such resounding victories in Iowa and New Hampshire that the nomination battle would be over before it had really begun, but that optimism has evaporated. Though he is campaigning virtually fulltime, he sounds a little rattled.

His presidential rivals naturally seized on his wretched performance to challenge his strongest claim to the nomination — that he is the candidate best equipped to defeat Mr Clinton. But the criticism extended far beyond his rivals.

Even Rush Limbaugh, the radio talk show host and arbiter of conservative opinion, joined the attack, touting that Mr Clinton would be re-elected if this is the best we can do.

Quarterback tackled by politically correct lobby

BY QUENTIN LETTS

POLITICAL correctness has reached that toughest of arenas, American football. A white player in tomorrow's Superbowl has been accused of racism because of the language he uses when extorting his black team mates.

Troy Aikman, quarterback for the mighty Dallas Cowboys, allegedly

singled out black colleagues for his bluest epithets. The quarterback is a pivotal man on the American football field, and customarily shouts instructions to the various attack players.

According to an anonymous complaint, Mr Aikman was unusually aggressive when addressing black players. Television footage showed him angrily slamming the ball down

at the feet of a black player after an unsuccessful manoeuvre. The matter was reported to the Cowboys' coach, Barry Switzer, who already had a strained relationship with his star quarterback. The two are now barely talking.

The controversy dominated the Cowboys' preparations in Arizona for Superbowl 30 tomorrow, when they

will take on the little-fancied Pittsburgh Steelers. Mr Aikman was swarped by reporters and asked if he was a racist. "I have no problem with my relationships with anyone on this team," he said of the Cowboys, but added that there was "some legitimacy" to accounts of what had occurred. Black teammates of Mr Aikman came to his defence yesterday.

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IT'S GOOD TO TALK

FBI seizes drawings stolen in 1967

FROM QUENTIN LETTS
IN NEW YORK

STOLEN works of art by Henry Moore and Pablo Picasso have been recovered in California, 28 years after they were taken from the University of Michigan.

The two pen-and-ink drawings, each worth an estimated \$100,000 (£66,500), were taken for evaluation to a San Francisco auctioneer by a woman who appears to have had no connection with their thief.

The San Francisco firm made contact with the Henry Moore Foundation in Hertfordshire to confirm the authenticity and determine the value of the Moore, a 1929 sketch entitled *Seated Figure*. The foundation checked its records, discovered that the drawing had been stolen in Michigan in 1967 and then discreetly alerted its former owner.

The university made contact with the FBI in California, which seized the drawings and questioned the woman.

"At the moment, no charges have been made, as there is no reason to believe that she knew the drawings were stolen," Greg Stejskal, an FBI agent said. "It would not normally be a smart move to take art to an auction house when it had been stolen." Nor, Mr Stejskal said, could the original thief be prosecuted because it was now too late under the statute of limitations. People who handled the stolen works of art more recently could be charged.

The Picasso drawing is a 1919 work entitled *Sketched from a Window*. Both drawings are in good condition and will be returned to the University of Michigan when the investigation is over.

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'After Hong Kong there is Macau and Taiwan in Long March to reunification'

Jiang picks tycoon to take over from Patten

By JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG
AND JAMES PRINGLE

PRESIDENT JIANG ZEMIN yesterday welcomed the establishment of a Chinese-appointed committee that will reimpose Chinese rule over Hong Kong next year, when British authority ends, and said it was a first station on what he called China's Long March to reunification.

The installation of the 150 members of the Preparatory Committee — none of them members of Hong Kong's biggest political grouping, the Democratic Party — at a ceremony in Peking was being watched with apprehension in the British territory.

Speaking in the Great Hall of the People to the delegates assembled for the formal founding of the committee, to be led by Qian Qichen, the Foreign Minister, Mr Jiang implied the way Hong Kong is handled could affect the issue of the return of Macau and Taiwan to China. Diplomats said this provides some safeguards for Hong Kong residents, given Peking's concerns about reuniting Taiwan with the mainland. The committee — which includes an eclectic mix of academics, lawyers and business tycoons from the

territory and uniformed Chinese army generals, officials and Communist Party cadres — will be in charge of setting up a new legislature and government, and thus dismantling the arrangements introduced by Britain, particularly the widening of the franchise under the electoral reforms introduced by Chris Patten, the colony's Governor, which have infuriated Peking.

"In terms of reunification, the return of Hong Kong to the motherland is the first station in our Long March," Mr Jiang said as letters of appointment to each of the 150 members, 94 from Hong Kong and 56 from the mainland, were handed out. "After that, there is Macau and finally Taiwan."

After the ceremony, Mr Jiang pointedly walked down a line of committee members to shake hands with Tung Chee-hwa, a shipping magnate whose name has been mentioned as a possible first Chief Executive who will take Mr Patten's place on July 1, 1997. It effectively placed Peking's imprimatur on Mr Tung as China's designate for Hong Kong's actual ruling body.

It was a striking, some



Qian Qichen, Chinese Foreign Minister, third from left, at the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for Hong Kong yesterday

might say crude, pre-emption of the Preparatory Committee's only really important responsibility: picking an "election committee" of 400 who some time later this year will choose the Chief Executive, who in turn will select an inner core of senior officials, many of them already serving the present Government, who may say will form, not a shadow government, but long before the handover Hong Kong's actual ruling body.

For a year the names of

possible candidates to be Chief Executive have been Hong Kong's favourite political guessing game. The population's overwhelming favourite is Anson Chan, the Chief Executive and Deputy Governor. Ms Chan, a 30-year veteran of the civil service, is the bureaucracy's longed-for selection. But her abilities and her long service to Britain seemed to rule her out.

But Mr Tung has long been a Peking favourite. A stupendously rich tycoon, with the

Shanghai background that would especially appeal to President Jiang, whose "Shanghai clique" forms the leading group in China, Mr Tung is a member of the People's Political Consultative Conference, a group of mainland and overseas Chinese worthies bidden as advisers. He is also in Mr Patten's Executive Committee or Cabinet.

"We will have a bright future if we do well with this first station of Hong Kong," the Chinese President and

party chief told the delegates, adding that they faced a tough task to complete their work in the less than 17 months remaining before the handover. "You have a long way to go."

China resumes sovereignty over the Portuguese colony of Macau in 1999, but reunification with Taiwan appears distant, with ties between Peking's Communist rulers and the island's Nationalists increasingly bitter over what China sees as an effort by President Lee of Taiwan, fac-

The future of President Samper of Colombia is in doubt after the resignation yesterday of two Cabinet Ministers, who said they lacked confidence in a President tainted by "links with the drug cartels" (Gabriella Gamini writes).

The President is accused of accepting more than \$4 million from the Cali cartel to help his 1994 election campaign, and is coming under increasing pressure to resign. Juan Gomez, the Minister of Transport, and Luis Ramos, Commerce Minister, made their announcements after key ambassadors quit.

Chrétien shuffles his Cabinet

Ottawa: Jean Chrétien, Canada's Prime Minister, shuffled his Cabinet and brought in two federalist Quebec academics to boost the cause of federalism in the province (Richard Cleroux writes). Stéphane Dion, a Montreal university professor, becomes president of the Privy Council and Minister responsible for Inter-Governmental Affairs. Pierre Pettigrew, an expert on foreign affairs, becomes Minister for International Co-operation.

Early snowfalls kill Tibetans

Peking: Heavy snowfalls have killed 13 people and 51,000 head of livestock in a high mountain valley inhabited mainly by Tibetans. More than 3ft of snow has fallen in Shiqu county since the storms began in mid-December, a month earlier than usual. Persistent sub-zero temperatures have caused 11,000 residents to suffer frostbite. (AP)

Spaced out

Montpellier: Police and psychiatrists were helping a man who sought their aid in tracing his lost vehicle — a spaceship on which he claimed to have landed 380 years ago. He said he needed to return to his planet as he left his guitar there. (AFP)

European specialists reported to be treating Saddam for cancer

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER
IN JERUSALEM

INTELLIGENCE experts in the Middle East were attempting yesterday to verify reports that President Saddam Hussein is suffering from lymphatic cancer.

The claim, which appeared first in *Foreign Report*, the London-based, limited-circulation newsletter produced by *The Economist* and known for its links to Western intelligence agencies, was given international prominence when it

was published yesterday on the front page of *The Jerusalem Post*.

The paper's well-connected London correspondent, Douglas Davis, said that sources in the Middle East had disclosed to *Foreign Report* that the 58-year-old Iraqi leader was receiving treatment from European cancer specialists who had been summoned to Baghdad where, due to United Nations sanctions, medicines are in short supply.

According to the *Post* account, which caused a sensation in embas-

ies in Israel and the Arab world, Saddam is said to be receiving radiation therapy and steroids which have left him bloated. The *Post* reported: "The cancer is described as a form of Hodgkin's disease, which is not necessarily fatal if detected at an early stage."

Western diplomats reacted cautiously to the story, which one noted could have "far-reaching and potentially explosive" repercussions for the region if it is true. Intelligence analysts said that it was common for senior members of the

Baghdad regime to be treated by medical teams from Europe.

"It is impossible at this stage to say for certain whether this report is true or whether it is deliberate disinformation spread by one or more foreign intelligence agencies for their own particular agenda," Otra Bengio, leading Iraqi expert at Israel's Dayan Centre, said.

Barry Rubin, author of a new book, *Iraq's Road to War*, said: "I read the story with fascination. Because of the source there is a 50 per cent chance it is true and a 50

per cent chance it is disinformation — and at this stage, I cannot say which."

A number of other Arab leaders are suffering from serious health problems that could easily destabilise the region if they should prove fatal. King Husain of Jordan, the leading supporter of the new peace process with Israel, has had a kidney removed after cancer was diagnosed; King Fahd of Saudi Arabia has recently been forced to hand over power because of failing health; and President Assad of

Syria is suffering from an unspecified blood disease which diplomats claim is leukaemia.

The report on Saddam's alleged cancer is detailed enough to lend it some veracity, but such is the secrecy that surrounds his life in Baghdad and the lack of access to him, that we are not likely to find out definitely one way or another. A European diplomat said: "The trouble with checking its veracity is that there is a lot of wishful thinking, so many people would like it to be true."

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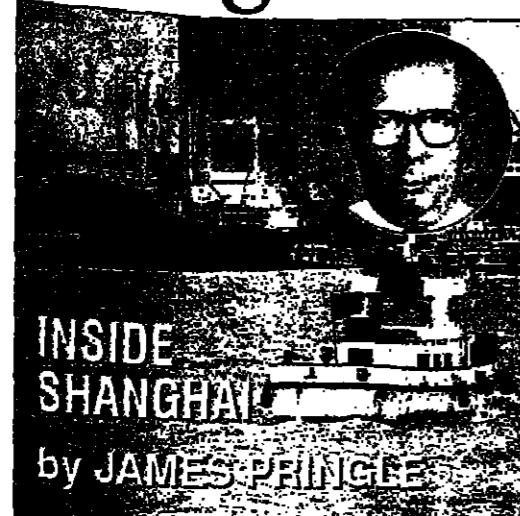
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Dragon's head gets a taste for raw capitalism



INSIDE
SHANGHAI
by JAMES PRINGLE

Shanghai may be booming, but behind the city's prosperity lie the Communist Party's iron grip and doubts about the future intentions of Peking

ONCE it was the Paris of the Orient, but for decades after the Chinese Communists came to power in 1949 Shanghai either languished or became a bastion of leftism.

Now, at last, the city seems to have taken off again with a vengeance. Gleaming new hotels are stuffed with foreign businessmen, bankers and property dealers hoping to cash in on the bonanza.

Shanghai's famed entrepreneurial spirit appears to have been set free. More than half a million play the stock market, housed in the 1860 Astor Hotel's ballroom, where visitors of China's current Communist leaders stare down from the walls on a scene of raw capitalism.

In the past three years, since the paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping, belatedly opened the floodgates by giving the go-ahead for this huge entrepot port near the mouth of the Yangtze river to "get rich" like the coastal cities of south China, a frenzy of activity has included construction of bridges, tunnels, flyovers, ring-roads and hotels.

"The Yangtze is like a drag-

on crossing China with Shanghai as the dragon head," says Zhang Sanfu, boss of Yachua Pilkington Glass, a Sino-British venture in Pudong. "Already we are catching up and I believe that in the next century Shanghai will become the most important city in China."

Pudong (East River) is a 200-square-mile complex of industrial parks, giant department stores and housing developments rising on the mudflats across the Whangpoo river from the Bund, Asia's best-known waterfront with its former foreign banks and trading houses.

On the rare day when the winter smog that wreathes the city lifts, the view from the top of the futuristic 1,544ft Oriental Pearl tower, dominating the Bund from the Pudong side of the Whangpoo, is of hundreds of building sites topped by cranes where tens of thousands of transient labourers work beside pounding pile-drivers.

You really have the sense that Shanghai has taken off and will once again become an international centre of trade and finance," says Dr Terry Gandy, of Manchester, who has been overseeing the Pilkington venture since the early Eighties.

This vibrant Shanghai is a far cry from the sad, grim city of two decades ago during the Cultural Revolution. Then children were taught to hate flowers and told to grow herbs. Even in the late Eighties, investment-starved Shanghai had a lacklustre feel. Yet beneath today's glittering surface of glamorous boutiques, throbbing discos and shimmering "girls who sell a smile" and proposition for-agers, the Communist Party retains a tight grip on power, even more so than in Peking. Envoy wonder how the city can become such an economic powerhouse when the free flow of ideas is curbed.

Analysts also point out that its fate rests with the Chinese President, Jiang Zemin, a former Shanghai Mayor, and a coterie of local protégés who now dominate the national leadership in Peking and closely direct developments back in their power base. A change in China's leadership could mean a shift of fortune for Shanghai, some foreign investors fear.

Shanghai and its current 13.5 million population, after all, has a turbulent political past — sometimes too capitalist, sometimes too leftist. The Communist Party was founded here in 1921 despite the Western influences of the foreign treaty port era. During the Cultural Revolution the city was the radical Gang of Four's HQ.

The Mao caps and tattered suits of the three million Migrant, or rural transient workers, contrast today with the designer clothes of the elite —



Vibrant Shanghai has taken off with a vengeance after years of neglect, revelling in its new freedom

an income gap that might fuel envy and unrest.

It is these labourers who allegedly contribute to the social problems which, as in prewar days, include the abandoning of unwanted children. Some of those end up in the city's orphanage, the centre of charges that it lets children die to keep numbers within its budget.

The dissident movement, envoys say, has been crushed in Shanghai, more so even than in Peking, with former activists in labour camps, in exile, or having simply given up the struggle for rights.

"There is a huge stress on social stability," noted one diplomat. "The party is afraid of losing its grip on the population at a time of eco-

nomic change. But, at the moment, Shanghai fulfils the ultimate Dengist dream — economic prosperity with total party control."

Though waitresses in cowgirl outfits serve table at one hotel, restaurant, and black-leather ultra-short mini-skirts were in vogue last summer, there are disconcerting reminders of recent Communist history, such as the disastrous 1958-1959 Great Leap Forward. To build the ring-road, for instance, 50,000 workers were mobilised, some arbitrarily ordered away from

foreign joint ventures. But few these days seem to think of the dissidents; they are too busy spending money in the shops of imported goods that line the city's two famous shopping streets — Nanking Road and Huaihai Road. But the frenzy has slowed down from an initial free-spending period 18 months ago.

Though there is Bally and Printemps, Louis Vuitton and three Italian restaurants, surprisingly, given its past, Shanghai does not yet have the feel of a cosmopolitan city. At this stage, Shanghai

could still go either way, many analysts feel. "Shanghaeans know where they are going because they have been there before," said one enthusiastic recent foreign arrival involved with business. "They have a sense of what Shanghai is and what it can be."

That is true, but there is another side to the picture. "Things are flying along now, but Shanghai has known violent swings," said a long-serving resident foreign trade official. "You never know when the political wind might change again."

Chinese vessels trigger gun battle

FROM ABBY TAN
IN MANILA

GUNBOATS of the Philippine Navy exchanged gunfire with one of two vessels flying the Chinese flag off Subic free port. There were a number of casualties on the Chinese side, said the navy, which suspects they were smugglers.

It said yesterday that the two vessels sailed into Philippine waters, 12 miles off Subic, northwest of the capital, Manila, this week. A naval craft fired warning shots and a 90-minute gun battle ensued at night. One of the Chinese ships tried to ram the naval craft but failed when it came under heavy machinegun fire from the gunboat. The two vessels then escaped.

The navy said it believed that one of the Chinese vessels was "hit and incurred casualties". The gunboat was unable to pursue the vessels because its guns had jammed and it was out of fuel. None of the naval crew suffered injuries.

In a separate statement yesterday, the navy described the intruders as suspected smugglers. Chinese ships do call at Subic free port to load cargoes of duty-free cigarettes and liquor for the mainland China market.

A spokesman for the Armed Forces of the Philippines said President Ramos had been informed of the clash, which occurred on Monday. The presidential palace has yet to respond to media inquiries.

This week's clash is the first violent incident between the two countries. Last May, Chinese vessels prevented a Philippine Navy craft carrying journalists from entering the disputed Spratly in the South China Sea, where the Chinese Navy had secretly occupied Mischief Reef, also claimed by the Philippines.

Earlier this week, Baroness Thatcher told a business forum in Manila that China would be a more formidable military power in the near future, given the pace of its economic growth. It was prepared to use implied threats to extend its power, she added.



A symbol of leftist faith on the Bund, where former foreign banks proclaim the city's capitalist links

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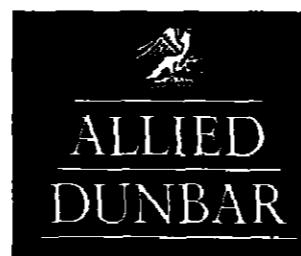
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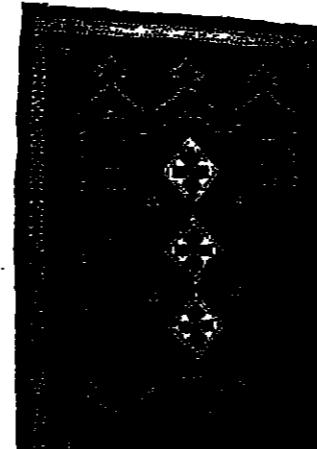
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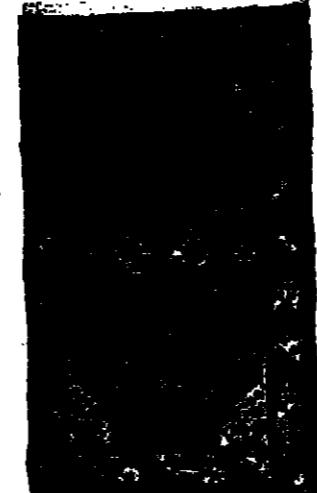
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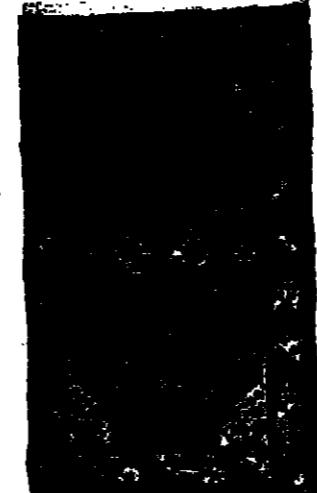
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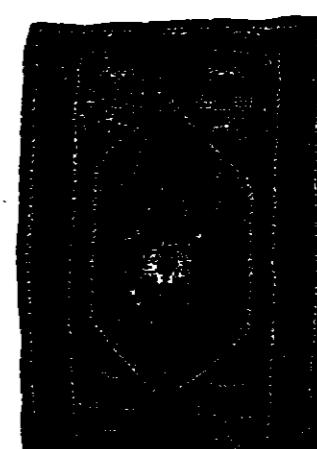
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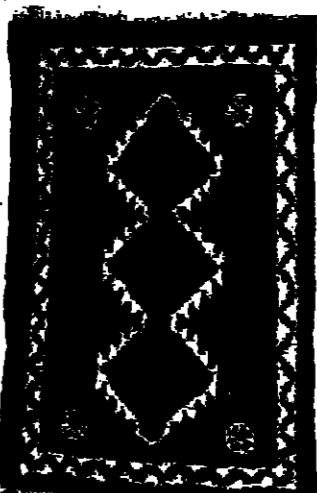
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Juppé struggles to preserve unity on EMU targets

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

FRANCE's bitter debate over European monetary union intensified yesterday when Philippe Séguin, Speaker of the National Assembly, called for renewed discussion on all aspects of Europe's future — and insisted that postponing a single currency would not be a disaster.

M. Séguin is the latest senior French politician to voice doubts over the country's ability to meet criteria for monetary union laid down by the Maastricht treaty. The Prime Minister, Alain Juppé, has said there will be no change in the Maastricht timetable: it requires countries cut their deficits to less than 3 per cent of GDP by 1997, but even Cabinet members have questioned whether France can meet the deadline.

"Is it not time to put everything back on the table?" M. Séguin said in a speech to a Franco-German conference on EMU in Aachen yesterday.

"Neither the eventual delay of the date for introducing a single currency, nor an eventual revision of the [Maastricht] criteria would have the disastrous effect that everyone fears today," he said, adding the EU inter-governmental conference in March should be the forum for reopening discussion on Europe's future.

M. Séguin, who led the campaign against Maastricht during the 1992 French referendum, is widely tipped to become the next Prime Minister, should M. Juppé be ousted. The Government struggled

to maintain unity in its ranks yesterday after senior Cabinet Ministers joined the chorus of French business leaders, financial analysts and politicians of various shades who fear France will be unable to meet the Maastricht criteria.

Jacques Toubon, the Justice Minister, said yesterday that the Government would achieve monetary union within the established timetable "because France's destiny is at stake".

"A great country like France does not change. When it signs treaties, it applies them," he

Premier loses pin-up status

Paris Alain Juppé has learnt the hard way that he is no pin-up (Ben Macintyre writes). Last week officials in Bordeaux, where M. Juppé is also Mayor, began hanging his portrait in schools, provoking an angry response from teachers who say they do not want the Prime Minister staring down at them.

A somewhat embarrassed M. Juppé insisted that schools had not been forced to put up the picture. The Mayor's Office said in future "only the establishments that ask will be given an official portrait".

One headmaster said: "At least it makes the children laugh."

said. "Our competitors would be delighted if there was no single currency."

The latest wave of scepticism, which pushed down the franc in early trading yesterday, was prompted by former President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's suggestion last week that the Maastricht timetable should be interpreted with "flexibility" in the light of France's economic slowdown.

Hervé de Charette, the Foreign Minister, said that proposal "deserved to be looked into", while Franck Borotra, the Industry Minister, declared that if it came to a choice between Maastricht and employment, he "would choose employment".

But M. Juppé bluntly declared the monetary union timetable remained sacrosanct. "Not only have we not discussed it, but we will not discuss it. The path has been set."

A chastened M. de Charette later issued a statement confirming his unconditional support for the timetable.

President Chirac, currently touring the provinces to try to boost his flagging popularity, insisted there was no contradiction between creating jobs and meeting the strict currency targets.

Despite the Government's upfront, many politicians within the ruling coalition privately admit a revision of those targets, by delaying the deadline or making the requirements less strict, is almost inevitable.

American concern has been mounting since Mr Yeltsin

Reshuffle by Yeltsin threatens IMF loan

FROM TOM RHODES
IN WASHINGTON
AND RICHARD BEESTON
IN MOSCOW

NEGOTIATIONS for a \$9 billion (£6 billion) Russian loan from the International Monetary Fund were yesterday heading for deadlock after Western financiers threatened to withhold funds from Moscow until it renewed its commitment to economic reform.

The present round of talks was to have been the last before executive board approval at a meeting next month, but the removal from President Yeltsin's inner circle of almost all pro-Western reformers has caused rifts inside the IMF and at the State Department in Washington.

"A number of issues still need to be decided," an IMF official said. "What matters is what is agreed between the mission and the Russian authorities on progress on economic reform."

The Western stand leaves both sides in a difficult position. President Yeltsin, if he sticks to a tight fiscal policy, risks a popular backlash that may damage his chances of re-election in the summer.

For its part, Washington is unsure how much pressure should be applied to Mr Yeltsin, whose defeat in elections would almost certainly open the door to Gennadi Zyuganov, the Communist Party leader.

Although there is growing disillusionment with Mr Yeltsin and his policies, he is still seen as the best alternative to the Communists.

American concern has been



Militant miners burn banners in Moscow yesterday in protest at pay arrears

effectively dismissed Anatoli Chubais, the Deputy Prime Minister for four years and the architect of reform, who supervised a vast privatisation programme.

The decision this week that Mr Chubais would be replaced by Vladimir Kadashnikov, an old-style Soviet industrialist, has further fuelled suspicions in Washington that the Yeltsin Government may be close to

disregarding a tight monetary policy. Mr Yeltsin has insisted that turning back on reforms would be "the ruin of Russia", but has called simultaneously for a relaxation in certain policies that have left millions of state employees without pay for months.

Aside from removing the reformers from the Government and freezing the privatisation process, Mr Yeltsin has also pledged to embark on an

extravagant spending spree, including more money for pensioners and students and the payment of back wages to disgruntled workers.

Last night, Mr Yeltsin asked

Viktor Chernomyrdin, his Prime Minister, to pay 600 million roubles (£85 million) in wage arrears to miners by the end of this month. The miners had called for a nationwide strike in protest at non-payment.

Durrell's 'rogue' Cypriot is shot

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU
IN NICOSIA

SABRI TAHIR, a Turkish Cypriot businessman immortalised in Lawrence Durrell's *Bitter Lemons*, was critically ill in hospital last night after he was shot by a man who had offered to be his bodyguard.

When Mr Tahir, 72, said he did not need such protection, the young man pulled out a pistol and fired four bullets into his leg before escaping in a rented car, according to local press reports.

Thursday's shooting took place in the Orient Hotel, a rather seedy establishment owned by Mr Tahir and the place where his only son, Adnan, was stabbed to death in 1980 by an unknown assailant.

There was speculation among the tightly-knit Turkish Cypriot community that Mr Tahir's attacker was from the Turkish mafia, which is involved in prostitution in northern Cyprus. It was not the first time Mr Tahir has been targeted: five years ago he survived a car bomb attack.

Durrell portrayed him as a lovable "rogue" in *Bitter Lemons*, an account of his stay in Cyprus during the turbulent 1950s. A whole chapter is devoted to his masterful negotiating skills as an estate agent when he helped the author to buy a house.

It was not only Mr Tahir's stylish business acumen that endeared him to the novelist. "Sabri was a gallant man," Durrell wrote. "I once saw him dive fully clothed into Kyrenia harbour to rescue a Greek fisherman's child in difficulties."



Durrell: devoted a chapter to Tahir

Russian savers live in fear for their fistful of dollars

BY RICHARD BEESTON

TWO hundred years after the death of Benjamin Franklin, the American statesman's portrait is at the centre of a crisis of confidence that threatens to affect the lives of Russians from the Baltics to the Pacific.

As Washington prepares to launch its new \$100 bill, which features a harder-to-counterfeit engraving of the American Founding Father, the banknote's arrival is being anticipated with fear and loathing by millions

of Russian savers. Russia holds the largest amount of US cash outside America, estimated at up to \$20 billion (£13 billion), more than three-quarters of it in \$100 banknotes.

To allay the public's concerns and avoid panic, the US Treasury took the unprecedented step this month of opening a hotline in Moscow to explain to anxious dollar-holders that their old \$100 bill would always be honoured by the US Government. Thomas Pickering, the US Ambassador, said at a recent press conference

to launch the information campaign: "All old US notes issued since 1861 are still valid at their full face value."

However, it is easy to sympathise with those Russians who still harbour doubts about the assurances and fear that their life-savings, usually held in \$100 banknotes hidden beneath their mattresses, will overnight be rendered worthless.

The Russian suspicions over the effects of currency changes are rooted in their own costly experiences: the introduction of new ruble

notes have often led to huge losses. In 1991, when Mikhail Gorbachev's Government introduced new 50 and 100 ruble bills, and again in 1993, this time under President Yeltsin, millions of Russians lost their savings when they failed to meet the deadlines set by the Government to exchange their old notes for new.

"People are ignorant and they have been created so many times by their own Government that they instantly panic when new notes are issued," Vladimir Morozov, a currency dealer in Moscow, said. The atmosphere of uncertainty has not been helped by the announcement by the eight leading banks in Moscow that they will charge a 2 per cent commission for exchanging old \$100 bills.

The banks argue that they are simply covering their costs, but Aleksandr Auzan, the president of the International Confederation of Consumers, estimates the Russian banks could make an easy \$40 million profit from the swap.

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Socialist leader makes gastronomic garrison on Rhine a mecca for lawyers, politicians and tourists

Leading lady's city triumph

SLEEK, prosperous, cosmopolitan, the ancient city of Strasbourg owes its future prosperity largely to two British cities: Edinburgh and York.

For it was in York that Strasbourg obtained the low-slung futuristic glass-and-steel carriages for the system that has transformed life in Strasbourg's twisting, overhung streets and leafy avenues and put the city on the world transport map: its pioneering, modern tramway.

Both, in their separate ways, attract hundreds of thousands of tourists, and the lawyers, parliamentarians and Eurocrats whose monthly pilgrimages here have largely insulated Strasbourg

STRASBOURG FILE
by MICHAEL BINYON



from France's current urban financial woes. Both are seen as crowning achievements of one of the country's most popular and influential women: Catherine Trautmann, Strasbourg's Socialist Mayor, who was, unusually, re-elected for a second term last year with an absolute majority on the first ballot.

Mme Trautmann knows that Strasbourg must now live, think and breathe Europe. The city of Albert Schweitzer, the Rhine garrison town, university seat and medieval market that is as German as it is French and has changed hands four times this century, Strasbourg has made Franco-German reconciliation a cornucopia of pros-

perity. It was chosen after the Second World War as the site for the Council of Europe, which has swelled to 39 members and under whose aegis the world's most effective guardian of Western humanitarian values functions: the European Court of Human Rights. The Council in turn brought the European Parliament here; all three bring money in abundance.

Europe is now Strasbourg's profession. For one week every month the hotels are overflowing, the taxis scarce, the restaurants full and the shopkeepers smiling. In addition to the political and legal contingent, industrial leaders flock to the city that is, after Paris, France's second largest

organiser of international industrial fairs, teach-ins and conventions.

Madame le Maire, a woman with iron convictions, piercing eyes and a force of personality that remind people of a cross between Baroness Thatcher and Queen Beatrix of The Netherlands, has made her name in this half-timbered city by a ruthless insistence on efficiency and planning. She has made the most of the withering of old industries by concentrating on investment in service industries, the environment and academic research institutions.

A Protestant theologian by training, she has an almost religious conviction on the need for efficient infrastructure. The tramway was her holy grail.

Sleek, green trams have now been gliding through the streets for just over a year. The single line, linking suburbs and city centre, will by the turn of the century be crossed by another.

Motorists are kept at bay by a combination of ferocious parking restrictions, road blocks reminiscent of the City of London and cheap tickets from park-and-ride centres on the periphery.

The system cost a fortune, but the trams are full. Taxi drivers complain there is less business. Town planners come from miles around to look at the comprehensive system.



Mme Trautmann, the popular and far-sighted Mayor of Strasbourg

Making a meal out of politics

ALMOST every city in France boasts that it is the nation's culinary capital. Strasbourg seems quixotic in its insistent claim, for its famed dishes of choucroute, hammequie, sausages and backette seem more German than French: mountains of pork and fat more to the taste of Chancellors in Bonn than Presidents in Paris. The boast, however, is not idle. The most famous buildings in Strasbourg are restaurants, and politics in Strasbourg is enveloped

in accusations of good eating and gourmet lifestyles. *La Maison des Tanneurs* shows off the photo of Nancy Reagan dining there. Helmut Kohl and Jacques Chirac sat down to bolster their prickly alliance in *Chez Yvonne*, a local Weinstube. Indeed, France's most bizarre murder case occurred just outside Strasbourg when Jean Schilling, the President of the Association of Master Chefs, was beaten to death when his restaurant was set alight.

Almost every city in France boasts that it is the nation's culinary capital. Strasbourg seems quixotic in its insistent claim, for its famed dishes of choucroute, hammequie, sausages and backette seem more German than French: mountains of pork and fat more to the taste of Chancellors in Bonn than Presidents in Paris. The boast, however, is not idle. The most famous buildings in Strasbourg are restaurants, and politics in Strasbourg is enveloped

Briton has designs on the future

BRITAIN has long been seen as the odd one out in Europe — the naysayer, the scourge of the integrationists and the awkward sceptic who refused to share the visions of the future.

It is ironic, therefore, that Britain, of all countries, has played so large a role in founding and building European institutions. Strasbourg honours Winston Churchill and Ernest Bevin, men whose postwar calls for unity encouraged the other founding fathers.

A British architect is now responsible for the physical addition to the cluster of European institutions in Strasbourg. Richard Rogers designed the new Palace of Human Rights, the building that houses the Court of Human Rights. The initial designs did not please the city — "more like a prison than a court", was the verdict; the revised conception has won more universal acclaim.

The Queen visited the site and planted a tree while the building was under construction in 1992 during her first and only visit to the city. Since its inauguration in June last year, Strasbourg has grown proud of the new palace.

European construction is still in progress, however. Despite a veritable complex of Euro-institutions, a larger, grander and more futuristic building is also going up to house the European Parliament due for completion in the next year or two. Sceptics might ask if it is needed.

"There really was no choice," Roland Ries, Strasbourg's Deputy Mayor, said. "When Brussels built an assembly chamber for the Parliament, Strasbourg had to show its commitment to the MEPs remaining here."

Bosnian women tell of mass rapes

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS
IN ZENICA, BOSNIA

SHE shut her eyes but the girl could not block out the Bosnian Serb soldiers' laughter as they held her stick-thin wrists and raped her over and over again.

She does not remember how many times, but she remembers their laughs. The soldiers also raped her mother, later shot and killed at their home in Zepa, eastern Bosnia.

The girl, 12, was also shot.

but survived and made her way to government-held Zenica in central Bosnia.

"I am sure her life is ruined," said Mirna Pojsic, a psychologist at the Medical centre, which specialises in helping women and children recover from war atrocities.

The girl's story could be one of those retold in court. Since the peace pact, war crimes investigators have stepped up collection of testimony and evidence of allegations of mass rape and the use of sexual

assault as a military policy. "This could be the first time in history that women are coming forward right after a war to talk about rape," said Jasna Bakic-Mufic, who is secretary-general of the Sarajevo chapter of the Union of Women's Associations of Bosnia.

The Hague tribunal's opening trial, scheduled for March 18, will mark the first time that rape has been included as a war crime. A woman, identified only as "F" in court

documents, is to testify against Dusan Tadic, a Bosnian Serb prison guard accused of murder, rape and torture.

The international tribunal has indicted 52 suspects — seven Bosnian Croats and 45 Bosnian Serbs, including the military commander, General Ratko Mladic, and the political leader, Radovan Karadzic. Bosnian government officials say as many as 30,000 Muslim women may have been sexually assaulted during the 3½-year war.

Austrians to honour Jews

FROM PAT KOZA
IN VIENNA

VIENNA: Austria is to erect its first memorial to commemorate the Holocaust. Designed by Rachel Whiteread, a British sculptor, it is to be placed near a synagogue's ruins.

Her sculpture, entitled "The Nameless Library", will show shelves of books with their spines turned inwards. The space inside is empty to represent the many readers who could not live on. About 65,000 Jews were killed in Austria by Nazis. (Reuters)

Poles split on Oleksy successor

FROM PAT KOZA
IN VIENNA

that Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, the former Foreign Minister, be appointed Prime Minister of an all-party government.

Mr Bartoszewski is respected at home and abroad. But his prospects are virtually nil unless the ruling left-wing coalition, comprising the Democratic Left Alliance and the Peasant Party, fails to find a new one is sworn in.

Taking seriously his campaign pledge to be President of the people, the former leader of the Democratic Left Alliance met heads of two opposition parties. They proposed

leaving office last month by making public the charge that Mr Oleksy had spied for Moscow for a decade. "In Poland, we are dealing with small interests, not the common good," he declared.

Mr Oleksy resigned after the military prosecutor this week began inquiries into his alleged KGB links.

Mr Kwasniewski, who met coalition leaders too, also talked to the Labour Union. He has 14 days to propose a candidate to the lower house.

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Today we publish the first part of our list of destinations which includes Vienna, Prague, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Budapest and major cities in Germany, Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Spain and Portugal. Details of short-breaks in France will appear next week.

The comprehensive key with our European hotel listing gives you the per person prices which include the cost of the channel crossing and one night's accommo-

dation. The first price listed is the per person cost based on a car and four people travelling together; the second price is based on a car and two people, and the third price shown is the cost per person of an additional night's stay.

In many hotels you will get the sort of luxury to which it is so easy to become accustomed. In others you get the basics, so if you want to save your money for spending on other things, you could have a room large enough to share with two children under 16.

And for readers who prefer to have negotiated special flight offers through Hamilton Travel with a guarantee that, if you find the identical flight for less within 24 hours of purchase, they will match the lower fare or give you a full refund. A list of flight destinations and fares appears below and details of how to book the flight option, if required, will appear with full details next week.

Simply collect three different tokens from *The Times* and complete a booking form which will appear next week.

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VIENNA
Holiday Inn 4* Near the Schönbrunn palace, modern, rest, bar. RO £29 £59 £23.
Hotel Kaiserhof 4* Quiet side-street location within walking distance of Opera. BB £29 £59 £23.
Hotel Tigris 4* Where Mozart stayed

Modern, swimming pool, sauna, solarium. RO £41 £89 £34 Mon-Thur supplement £30pp.

GHENT
Holiday Inn 3* Good base for exploring the city's glorious medieval past, modern, rest, leisure facilities. RO £59 £89 £42. Mon-Thur supplement £15pp.

Modern, swimming pool, sauna, indoor pool, sauna, solarium, fitness and beauty salon, bar, bowling alleys. RO £39 £49 £27 2+2.
Izn-Side Hotel Wien 3* Central, Viennese-style cafe-rest, fitness centre, sauna. BB £59 £89 £46.
Izn-Side Hotel Art 3* Newly built, five minutes from city shopping. RO £49 £59 £33.

BRAY
Royal Hotel 3* Seaside resort south of Dublin, pool, sauna, solarium, gym, elegant restaurant. RO £39 £49 £20.

DUBLIN
The Regency Hotel 3* Overlooking centre, main house dates back 200 years, rest, bar, elegant lounge. RO £39 £49 £20.

MILAN
Excelsior Hotel Gallia 4* Central, rest specialising in regional cuisine, health club, gym, sauna. RO £79 £129 £39 £28. Weekends only.

Hotel City 3* Heart of shopping area, modern. RO £39 £49 £25 A supplement of £24pp applies to certain dates, call for details.

Holiday Inn 3* West of city, near centre, imposing, modern. RO £89 £129 £37.

ROME
Hotel Eden 4* Close to Spanish steps, recently restored to former glory. Forum and Colosseum can be enjoyed from panoramic restaurant. BB £59 £109 £93 Min 2 nights; free use of gym.

Hotel Piccadilly 3* Near

park of chestnut trees, rest, pizzeria, indoor pool, sauna, solarium, fitness and beauty salon, bar, bowling alleys. RO £39 £49 £27 2+2.
Izn-Side Hotel Art 3* Central, Viennese-style cafe-rest, fitness centre, sauna. BB £59 £89 £46.
Izn-Side Hotel Art 3* Newly built, five minutes from city shopping. RO £49 £59 £33.

The three-star Holiday Inn, Leiden, Netherlands from £59 per person

Colosseum, breakfast room on 8th floor with panoramic views. RO £39 £49 £25.

Holiday Inn 3* Close centre, indoor pool, tennis, squash, sauna, solarium. BB £59 £89 £42. Min stay 2 nights.

AMSTERDAM
Ibis Centrum 2* On the water's edge, rest, bar. Public parking available opposite, and garage parking (payable). RO £49 £59 £27.

Holiday Inn 3* Central, just 5km from airport, rest, bar. RO £49 £59 £24.

Cok Tourist Class 3* Overlooking Vondelpark, close to Rijksmuseum, modern. BB £59 £89 £24.

Cok Superior Tourist Class 3* A train ride from Damrak square and the city's famous Van Gogh museum. BB £59 £49 £24.

Cok Business Class 3* Overlooking the Vondelpark, modern, comfortable. BB £59 £89 £24.

Le Méridien Apollo 4* Canalside where five waterways meet, close to city centre, modern, à la carte rest, brasserie, bar. RO £59 £89 £50.

Eden Hotel 3* Overlooking Amstel river, short walk to Rembrandtplein, mixture of traditional and modern

amenities. RO £59 £89 £48. Mon-Thur supplement £20pp.

Hôtel Des Bergues 5* Overlooking Lake Geneva with a stunning view of French Alps, first opened in 1854, classified as an historic monument. RO £59 £109 £59.

LISBON
Ibis Centro 2* On Avenue José Malhoa, well-placed for exploring. RO £49 £59 £22.

Holiday Inn 3* Central, just 5km from airport, rest, bar. RO £49 £59 £24.

Le Méridien Lisbon 4* Central with spectacular views from one of the city's famous seven hills, international cuisine, regional specialities. RO £59 £89 £48.

GENEVA
Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza 4* Close to pictureque old town, stylish, modern, indoor pool, sauna, Turkish baths.

RO £59 £89 £48. Mon-Thur supplement £20pp.

Hôtel Des Bergues 5* Overlooking Lake Geneva with a stunning view of French Alps, first opened in 1854, classified as an historic monument. RO £59 £109 £59.

THE TIMES
EUROPEAN
SHORT
BREAKS
TOKEN 1

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■ OPINION
Are we turning into a nation of snoozers? Research suggests that we just want to stay in bed



■ DANCE
The legacy of Diaghilev, perhaps the greatest of impresarios, goes on show at the Barbican



■ THEATRE
Pretty music, but superficial performances, in a new *Twelfth Night* in Watford



■ RECORDS
A brilliant disc from guitar virtuoso Sharon Isbin, plus other new CDs reviewed in Weekend, page 8

Tell me this. Are we sleeping too much? As a nation, I mean. It's an odd question, but it has been keeping me awake at nights. You see this week the 1996 edition of *Social Trends* — the bible of British statistics — was published, and it suggests that we are a very dozy country indeed. The average British adult apparently sleeps an incredible 61 hours each week — or eight hours 43 minutes per night. They may be sleepless in Seattle, but in Sidcup, Stirling and Swansea, it seems, they can't get their heads down often enough.

Who are these amazing average adults? Nobody I know admits to sleeping more than seven hours a night, and some playboys of the Wapping world boast that they get by on four or five hours ("work hard, play hard, that's my motto, laddie"). Perhaps the figure in *Social Trends* takes into account those illicit naps in the office ("just popping down to the archives, Doris; hold the fort for an hour, would

you?"). Even so, there is clearly some discrepancy between anecdotal evidence and the cold statistical summaries of *Social Trends*. Perhaps we ought to call it a yawning gap.

If *Social Trends* is correct, it has all sorts of worrying implications for people in the entertainment industry. Consider this: Mr and Mrs Average spend eight hours and 43 minutes in the Land of Nod each night. Assume that their alarm goes off at 7.30am for a nine o'clock start at work. This would suggest that they are safely tucked up before 11pm each evening. So they will need to be home well before ten if they are to enjoy a cocoa, a bath and a quick canoodle before lights out (and *Social Trends* does suggest that the average adult spends a healthy 15 hours a week on "eating, personal

hygiene and caring", with the figure rising — for some mysterious reason — to an obsessive 21 hours for "females in part-time employment").

Do you see what I am driving at? If so, you have remarkable telepathic powers. Try bending some spoons while I elucidate for other readers. When did you last attend a play, concert, opera or ballet that finished before nine in the evening? I'll wager that you cannot remember. Yet logically that is when all live entertainment should finish, if it is to fit in with the dreary lifestyle of Mr and Mrs Average UK Adult. Little wonder, then, that the average time spent by our dull couple at "concerts, theatre, cinema and sports spectating" is deemed too insignificant for *Social Trends* to quantify.

It gets worse. Our average adult,

you have to conclude that the Average British Brain is disengaged from any semblance of activity for half of its life (if "life" is what it is deemed to be).

True, some telly programmes can engage the brain. I am fairly sure that I am mentally alert during *Baywatch*, for example, whereas I drift in and out of consciousness during *Gladiators*, and have almost no recollection of *Blind Date*, though my loved ones assure me that I do, in fact, sit through many exciting instalments of Miss Cilla Black's *divertissement*.

But what's to be done about the Mogadon Majority? Or should anything be done? After all, the great poets are divided on the big sleep question. The School of Snooze, led by Keats, are all in favour of slumping into slumber —

or at least soporific alliteration — as often as possible.

*O soft embalmer of the still midnight:
Sleeping with careful fingers
and benign
Our gloom-pleased eyes...*

Er, quite. Wake us when you reach the punchline, John. On the other hand, there's the "ain't life grand before dawn" school, led by Herrick. They advise rising at about 5am, so that Nature's wonders may be sampled while the dew is still fresh on the daisies.

*Nay! not so much as out of bed?
When all the birds have matins
said...*

That does seem excessively macho. I don't know about where you live,

but out here in deepest Hendon the birds tend to say matins pretty early. Nevertheless, Herrick's approach is surely closer to what our supine country needs at present. We can't go on wasting half our lives in a state of torpor.

Perhaps this could be the Big Idea that the Prince of Wales so earnestly seeks to mark the millennium. We could launch a national campaign: *Keep Britain Awake*. And not just awake, but active. It's unbelievable that the nation which produced Newton, Brunel, Wren and Dickens should now be content to devote four hours a week, on average, to "pet care". That's two whole years of an average British life spent dishing out Pedigree Chum.

Yet this is what *Social Trends* says that we do. I must say, I am starting to dislike *Social Trends*. It does seem to portray us as a nation of gormless slugs. After all, if these are Britain's *social* trends, just imagine how terrible the antisocial ones must be.

This is your wake-up call, Britain

Debra Craine
on an
exhibition
about the
founder of the
Ballets Russes

He wasn't a dancer, and he didn't make ballers. He didn't design them, and he didn't write the music for them. Yet Serge Diaghilev is one of the giants of the dance world, his name synonymous with innovation and excitement.

His circle of collaborators included some of the greatest dancers — Pavlova, Nijinsky, Karsavina — and the greatest choreographers — Fokine, Massine, Balanchine — of the 20th century. The array of designers who dressed his productions is awesome from Bakst and Benois to Picasso and Matisse. Diaghilev commissioned the most important ballet music Stravinsky ever wrote — *Firebird*, *Petrushka* and *The Rite of Spring* — and he employed Debussy, Satie, Ravel and Prokofiev to write ballets for him.

Even today, more than 65 years after his death in 1929, Diaghilev exudes a kind of exotic magnetism. Books and films have retold his story for each generation. Now a new exhibition at the Barbican, *Diaghilev: Creator of the Ballets Russes*, attempts to trace the development of Dia-

ghilev's vision, the entrepreneurial drive and artistic philosophy that led him to form the Ballets Russes, arguably the most influential ballet company ever. More than 300 works, selected by the art historian Ann Kodicek, have been drawn together from public and private collections in Russia and the West, including costumes and original set designs never seen in London before.

The exhibition is presented in two distinct halves. Upstairs is what came before the Ballets Russes, the early days in Paris where art and music were the everyday components of Diaghilev's privileged upbringing. Then, from 1890, the days in St Petersburg where he went to study law

and became part of Benois' Society for Self Improvement, a cultural talking shop for young artists and literati. It wasn't long before Diaghilev, Bakst and Benois were turning the art world on its head with their extraordinarily lavish magazine, *The World of Art* (one of the most impressive displays in the show); soon Diaghilev was making a name for himself mounting exhibitions of Russian and European paintings, culminating in the 1906 *Exhibition of Russian Art* in Paris.

Downstairs, though, is what everyone comes to see: the glorious, art-driven thrust of the early years of the Ballets Russes (the Barbican show ends in 1914). The ground floor is fitted out like a theatre, with heavy red velvet curtains and eight proscenium arch decorations depicting scenes from Diaghilev's opera and ballet productions. Here you find Golovine's magic garden designs for *The Firebird*, Goncharova's primary-coloured Disneyland set for *Le Coq d'Or*, Bakst's extravagant evocation of an Arabian harem for *Scheherazade*, Benois' cosy puppet world for *Petrushka*. What is most evident is how these Russian artists, especially Benois and Bakst, came alive in the theatre; their paintings upstairs seem etiolated by the vibrancy of their work for the ballet.

There are 18 costumes: six from the State Theatre Museum in St Petersburg, 12 from the Theatre Museum in London (all of which have been hidden away in a warehouse). You can see the costume Karsavina wore as the ballerina in *Petrushka*; the costume Nijinsky wore for his Albrecht in 1911; Fokine's costume in *Carnaval*. Diaghilev himself hovers like an invisible presence.

There are early photographs and, most impressively, those *World of Art* journals. But there are no personal possessions, no letters, no documentary evidence of the role he played in nurturing the talent in his midst. The one thing missing from this impressive exhibition is Diaghilev's extraordinary personality.

• Diaghilev: Creator of the Ballets Russes, Barbican Art Gallery (0171-382 7105), until April 14

Bakst's costume design for a Bacchante in *Narcisse*, one of 300 works at the Barbican

Perspectives

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SUNDAY TIMES

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THEATRE

Love on a warm dish

MUSIC, the food of love, plays a lead part in this Oxford Stage Company production. Feste (David Brett) underscores Shakespeare's scenes of half-confessed love, late-night drinking and near-duels with his accordion or guitar.

Kate Fleetwood's Viola and Sebastian (Christopher Chambers), her twin brother, open the play singing "Youth's a stuff will not endure" hauntingly, before spinning and parting in a dance that suggests their shipwreck. This opening song, lyrically sweet yet bitterly mournful, captures the play's poignancy, but there

are traces of sentimentality elsewhere.

The cast speak verse perfectly, but the subtleties are sometimes missing, and the intensity too. Lisa Turner's husky Olivia could be more proudly chilly and put double the passionate pressure on Viola. The latter might respond with fiercer prickliness. Janine Wood's upmarket Maria is sparkly; Andrew Frame's Sir Toby is fine; Alex Kaye Campbell, by making Sir Andrew's song, makes him less lovably 'small-brained. Meanwhile the play's dark heart is scarcely plumbed. Brett lacks Feste's manic-depressive edge. Jones' Coyne's Malvolio smiles with all the allure of a lunatic.

Still, the company, boldly playing soliloquies and repartee out to the audience, generates a warm atmosphere.

THEATRE

Twelfth Night

Palace, Watford

are traces of sentimentality elsewhere.

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The welcome return to the Barbican by The London Philharmonic
DAVID ANGUS conductor JOSE FEGHALI piano
Mendelssohn: Hebrides Overture, Finale! Canz.
Sibelius: Finlandia, Grieg Piano Concerto
Beethoven: Symphony No. 1, Pastoral

£10-£14.50, £19.50, £25.50 Presented by Raymond Gubbay

Mon 29 Jan 7.30pm

Young Musicians Symphony Orchestra

James Star conductor Richard Watkins horn
Wagner: Lohengrin, The Warhorse Benjamin Lees hum
Carmina Burana, Brahms: Scherzo, Ein Heldenleben
£10-£14.50, £19.50, £25.50 Sponsored by Unilever

Thu 1 Feb 7.30pm

Orchestre de Paris

Great Orchestras of the World
Semyon Bychkov conductor Elizabeth Norberg-Schulz
Johann Strauß: Jäger, Van Ness mezzo-soprano
Maurizio Costanzo piano, David Oistrakh violin

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Fri 2 Feb 7.30pm

Orchestra de Paris

Great Orchestras of the World
Semyon Bychkov conductor Maxim Vengerov violin
Gibert: Ainsi Je Peux, Score: Prokofiev: 10th premiere
Maurizio Costanzo piano, David Oistrakh violin

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Brahms: Piano Concerto no. 2

Brahms: Rhapsody in G minor, op. 79 no. 2

Sibelius: Symphony no. 5

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Royal Festival Hall

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Sat PHILHARMONIC Orchestra, RFI Associate Orchestra, 27 Jan 1996: Dvorák: Cello Concerto; Vivaldi: Winter Works by Tchaikovsky; Brahms: Schumann: Brahms, RFI 16pm: concert, free with concert ticket. £30-£50

Sat The London Philharmonic Resident at the RFI 28 Jan Young musicians from the Royal College of Music Education Services 6.30pm: a special birthday concert to mark the 50th anniversary of UNICEF. £25 (US conc)

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THE TIMES SATURDAY JANUARY 27 1996



■ MUSICAL

The first European staging of Kurt Weill's Broadway show, *Love Life*, is spoilt by mediocre staging



■ BASE NOTES

Whitney Houston meets Mickey. Mouse the singer and actress will now produce films for Disney



■ BASE NOTES

Sir Norman Foster is on the distinguished shortlist to design the V&A's Boilerhouse



■ ON MONDAY

Will Slaughter City prove to be a powerful new play for the Royal Shakespeare Company?

Rodney Milnes hails the revival of an obscure Weill musical, but not its staging

Nice songs, shame about the visuals

First, the good news. Weill and Lerner's "vaudeville in two parts" of 1948 is an astonishing piece of work. "Years ahead of its time" may be the hoariest of clichés, but no other words will do. As the performance of this virtually plotless "concept" musical progressed in Leeds, title after title of Broadway shows that could scarcely have happened without its example kept springing to mind, in particularly those of Sondheim — *Company*, *Follies*, even *Assassins*, which also traverses a spectrum of popular American musical forms to bind the concept together.

There are also detectable foreshortenings of *West Side Story*, *Gypsy* and *Cabaret*,

and it is tragic that this vital piece in the jigsaw of Broadway history should have gone missing for so long, and for reasons that have nothing to do with its quality. Strikes at the time of the successful first run meant no recordings and no sheet-music. Then, after Weill's death, Lerner blocked revivals for reasons of his own.

Yet it is much more than just an "important" score. You come out of the theatre unable to decide which of half-a-dozen great tunes you should be humming and, as is the case with Weill's European pieces, this means in a piece that is a succession of swiftly moving scenes, a drop curtain won't do — it's too slow. There were countless embarrassing hiatuses while we stared at the wretched curtain, waiting in silence for the next scene to begin. The show fell apart.

For the principals, out there on their own, nothing but praise. Margaret Preece played the ingénue wife very

is three parts sour to one part sweet, with the music coming in roughly the same proportion and in a bewildering variety of styles, from the two string lines in counterpoint at the opening (Broadway Bach) to *Oklahoma*-style upbeat to savage satire to affectionate pastiche of vaudeville and cabaret routines.

But every bar could only be by Weill, magnificently orchestrated, pulsating with compassion however hard-edged the surface context. The conductor, Wyn Davies, clearly relished the work's manifold beauties, and conveyed his relish to orchestra and audience alike.

Now for the less good news. For once it seemed that *Opera North's Love Life* had bitten off more than it could chew. It would be nice to argue that the company simply didn't have the money to throw at a show that needs the utmost in Broadway pizzazz, but that wouldn't be the whole truth: you can field pizzazz on no money at all. *No, Love Life* was misconceived visually, limply directed, and poorly choreographed.

The producer, Caroline Gawn, inexperienced in the genre, did not seem to know how to end a number (many were just left hanging in mid-air) and in a piece that is a succession of swiftly moving scenes, a drop curtain won't do — it's too slow. There were countless embarrassing hiatuses while we stared at the wretched curtain, waiting in silence for the next scene to begin. The show fell apart.

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Margaret Preece (foreground) in fine voice in *Opera North's Love Life*

sweedy and, even if she lacks the Ethel Merman dimension needed when the going gets nasty, made a lot of the dazzling torch song *Mr Right*. As the husband, Alan Oke managed both the sleaze of *I'm Your Man* and the near-tragedy of his lonely monologue in a hotel room. Geoffrey Dolton played the

Cabaret-style MC role with enormous panache — he proved a better mover than any of the eight dancers on stage — and sang the motto *Love Song* with great passion.

Love Life is a real eye-opener: go and see it, but just be very, very patient with the staging.

who claim that Carey's 1991 hit *Can't Let Go* was lifted from a song they wrote.

■ NEXT WEEK sees the first London workshop of a new stage version of the musical classic, *A Star Is Born*, produced by Andrew Lloyd Webber's Really Useful Group. Attaching a new book by American librettist Larry Gelbart (*of City of Angels* fame) to Harold Arlen's existing score, the workshop will be directed by Steven Pinlott and star the Broadway actress Judy Kuhn (*Chess*, *Les Misérables*) in the role Judy Garland made famous. The performance is not open to the public, but is intended to give the creative team a chance to decide the next step.

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Why schools are failing the future

Iain Duncan Smith on what makes a good primary school

The very public argument about where Harriet Harman is sending her child to school has raged both nationally and at Westminster this week. Yet at the same time, something else occurred which is no less important and gives us an insight into the cause of the argument: the big socialist education experiment that failed.

This week saw the publication of the test results for 7, 11 and 14-year-olds which should be required reading for any parent, would-be parent, teacher or politician. Much of the argument about the education system has been around the status and quality of education in secondary schools while beneath all of that the Cinderella of the system, primary education, has to a large extent passed people's notice. Yet as the results for 11-year-olds demonstrate, it is this area which is arguably the most important and the most in need of examination. For it is here that some of the more ludicrous experiments took place as a result of the 1960s rethink of teaching methods.

Primary school lays the foundation for all that follows, for if a child enters secondary school without a basic ability in the three Rs the rest of their education is a nightmare for them. However, I fear that once the educational establishment has studied these results from the primary schools, it will be tempted to set up study groups to tell us why they are so poor — a process which would waste time and only end up telling us what most parents know already.

The secret of a good primary school is the head teacher. A motivated and focused head teacher, as I have observed on many occasions, can move mountains. It is they who direct their teachers, who create the right environment through discipline and organisation and who find ways of dealing with even the most recalcitrant parents.

There is a big gap between running a primary school and teaching in one. Selection is too often a case of "dead men's shoes" compounded by politically correct criteria pushed upon them by socialist local education authorities.

One school I know, which exists in the most difficult circumstances and in the shadow of a housing estate, illustrated this perfectly for me. The parents who send their children here are not middle-class, many are themselves failures of the system. The head teacher realised that standards relied to a great extent on the parents' involvement at home. Yet the parents were scared of exposing their shortcomings to their children or to the teachers, and their children often returned to school with incomplete homework. This particular head teacher brought the parents into the school, reminded them of the importance of their involvement, but — most im-

A motivated and focused head teacher can move mountains

The good schools have also returned to uniforms, thus helping to break peer-group pressure in the playground and instilling a sense of *esprit de corps* among pupils, staff and parents. The guiding themes which seem to exist among good schools are those of structure and discipline. They re-emphasise the core values. One primary school I know has even decided to teach Latin again to improve understanding of English.

While this Government has started to change the system for the better, these test results show we have a great deal more to do. We knew when we arrived in Government that the system was already failing as a result of the ideological nonsense that had been rammed down teachers' throats by the education establishment and the Labour Party through the comprehensive system. So many politically motivated local authorities continued with these ideologies and if criticism is due, it is that we should have tackled them faster.

The object, therefore, must now be to press ahead with the reforms and we should introduce league tables for primary schools to identify the successful ones. This will help us to challenge and reverse all those remaining facets of the socialist experiment that failed. Only by doing this will we ensure that future test results do justice to our children.

The author is Conservative MP for Chingford. Two of his children attend a state primary school.

Idol moment

THE THRILL of being selected to fight Harrogate for the Tories may be eclipsed by an even more exciting date in Norman Lamont's diary. After more than 20 years of worship he is to sit down at the same luncheon table as his idol — Lawrie McMenemy, the man he reveres as the most successful manager in the history of Grimsby Town Football Club.

McMenemy, known to his footballing friends as "the big fella", is now director of football at

Southampton FC and was manager of Lamont's beloved "Mariners" in the early 1970s when he took them to the heady heights of Fourth Division champions. This transpires to have been an event as important in the former Chancellor's life as Black Wednesday. He bumped into McMenemy, a jolly giant of a man with a good line in after-dinner jokes, at a recent party thrown by Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare and wasn't too starry-eyed to arrange lunch.

He's always been the greatest hero of mine, a very successful manager of Grimsby who I have supported since I lived there," says Lamont. "I'm a great admirer of football managers. They have something in common with Chancellors in the way they get."

Lamont's loyalty, in respect of Grimsby Town, should not be doubted. One Christmas, during his Chancellorship, fans were amused to spot him wrapped up in a team scarf and cap, queuing at the turnstiles with his son. The club chairman, witnessing this scene, took pity and brought him in from the cold for a winter warmer in the directors' box.

• Some of our political dinosaurs are already extinct in the minds of



McMenemy: local hero

Of course Hattie Harman is a hypocrite. But the non-political classes (95.2 per cent of the population) are now thoroughly bored with the uproar about which school she and her husband (and son) select for the boy. Our attention span for such party games is as short as the time it takes to sink a pint of Old Petyfogger's Peculiar in the snug bar. And anyhow, the real row is not about hypocrisy at all.

The row is actually only another final shoot-out between new Labour and old Labour in the civil war for the soul of her party, enjoyable for bystanders, though not for Ms Harman. Of course she has made the right choice in putting the education for her son above the last shibboleth of her party to test political purity. And of course salmon-bar pundits — and their representatives, backbenchers of all parties — are raging with righteous indignation and guffawing with *Schadenfreude*. But of course Hattie is a hypocrite, and of course she is right.

We English are famous through-

out the world for our hypocrisy about schools — and everything else. Why else would we call our expensive private schools "public"? Why else would we send our children straight from sucking milk-bottles away to boarding schools "for their own good", and "it never did me any harm (Sex who, Dad)?". All other nations get rid of their children in this way only when ordered to do so by a judge. The hardest part of learning English is neither the grammar nor the pronunciation, but the subtext of hypocrisy. This is the language in which "With the greatest respect..." is academic hypocrisy for "I have no respect for your opinion at all, and am about (metaphorically) to break the top off a bottle and (literally) deconstruct you".

If we are to survive in hypocrisy, we speak from an early age we learn the English skill of conveying our meaning in reports and references, without spelling it out. "I have never experienced a secretary like him." "Major Blood will be greatly missed by our more adventurous science

specialists." "We don't know how we'll ever replace her (mainly because we haven't quite worked out what she did)."

Tony Baldry, our Fisheries Minister, was using postgraduate hypocrisy when he told *Fishing News* and *The World at One* that British waters out to the 12-mile limit are "not negotiable". Fishing rights

right up to the shoreline were handed over to the EU under Regulation 2141/70, so they are "not negotiable" after 2002 only because there is nothing left to negotiate. This was breathtaking ministerial hypocrisy: literal truth masking utter deception.

Burns Night in this, the poet's 200th anniversary year, has been celebrated with a *spate* of haggis, whisky and hypocrisy. The thirstiest drunkard in the parish praised his wit. Wee Free ministers of religion admired his temperance, the biggest lechers in Rotary drooled on about his romanticism, and the most terrifying trout acted as *antidotes* to desire and oxymorons as respondents on behalf of the bony lasses. John Major suggested that Burns would have voted Conservative against more taxes. But as an excise man Burns might well have been in favour of more excise duties. Burns, like any great artist, was a mass of contradictions, the follower of no party line. The only thing that matters is that he wrote the truest (and funniest) love lyrics.

English hypocrisy grows out of our puritanical and passionate history. In the Greek theatre — where the word started, like irony, agony, and many others — the hypocrite was a bit-player who "answered" the protagonist. His original sin was merely that he answered back.

The Authorised Version, with Christ's denunciations of scribes, Pharisees and hypocrites, gave hypocrisy a bad name — although the advice about doing your good deeds in private rather than in the corners of the streets like hypocrisy is sound, and should be heeded by self-publicising hustlers and ageing pop stars at charity concerts.

But decent hypocrisy is essential to civilised society. When sent an unsolicited typescript of a 1,000-page novel with a request for your honest opinion, the truth is always: "I would pay £10 if you promised never to inflict such rubbish on me again." It is kinder to be a hypocrite (and plagiarist): "I shall waste no time in reading your novel."

A millennium fit for a Prince

The Prince of Wales is calling for spiritual renewal in the year 2000, but there is no shortage of visions

The Prince of Wales wrote this week that the end of the millennium should be a time of spiritual renewal, not a materialist binge. He called for reflection rather than a "giant but essentially meaningless party". Here was a chance, he said, to restore the "enduring cultural priorities which represent a moral foundation in a world dominated by consumerism".

The Prince's abstract nouns are nowadays converted into tabloid prose at phenomenal speed. Those sent to search his historical haystack for needles of meaning are forbidden to return without a story. As a result, they grasp at a talking plant, a Hindu temple or a sustainable-resource activity-centre and leave it at that.

Small wonder that Thursday's

paper was confused by the Prince's musings in *Perspectives in Architecture* magazine. "Make it a matter of the spirit," said a desperate headline in *The Guardian*. The tabloids gave up: "You mosque is joking" said the *Daily Star*, "You've lost the pottery, Charles" said *The Sun*. The heir to the Throne is a splendid parsonical Midas. All he touches turns to sermon.

Everyone involved in the millennium preparations has faced the same question as the Prince: what is the vision? We know that the calendar is based on the birth of Christ, though it appears to be five years adrift. We mark anniversaries and birthdays as temporal milestones. But these are no more than the tick of a clock or the chime of a bell. Centuries are astronomically insignificant. The first day of the new millennium will be no different from the last of the old. The date is hollowed by tradition, but nothing else. Who needs vision? Why the fuss?

The answer is that on the night of December 31, 1999 (or for purists, a year later), a great fuss there will be. Lottery players will have donated more than a billion pounds to making that fuss. Everyone will, for some altruistic reason, feel something at the turn of the millennium. Even the cynic who has a drink and goes to bed early will do so deliberately. I believe the so-called "vision dilemma" is really a deep uncertainty, not the "tumult and the shouting" of "The Captain and the Kings" of Kipling's *Recessional*. "An humble and a contrite heart... Let us forget, lest we forget."

The Prince suggests that the millennium should be the occasion for a cosmic new year's resolution. Many of us might sympathise. But what does this mean? Insofar as it can be pinned down, the proposal is emphatically not that portrayed by Musil's public commissioners. It is not "the tumult and the shouting", the "Captain and the Kings" of Kipling's *Recessional*. "An humble and a contrite heart... Let us forget, lest we forget."

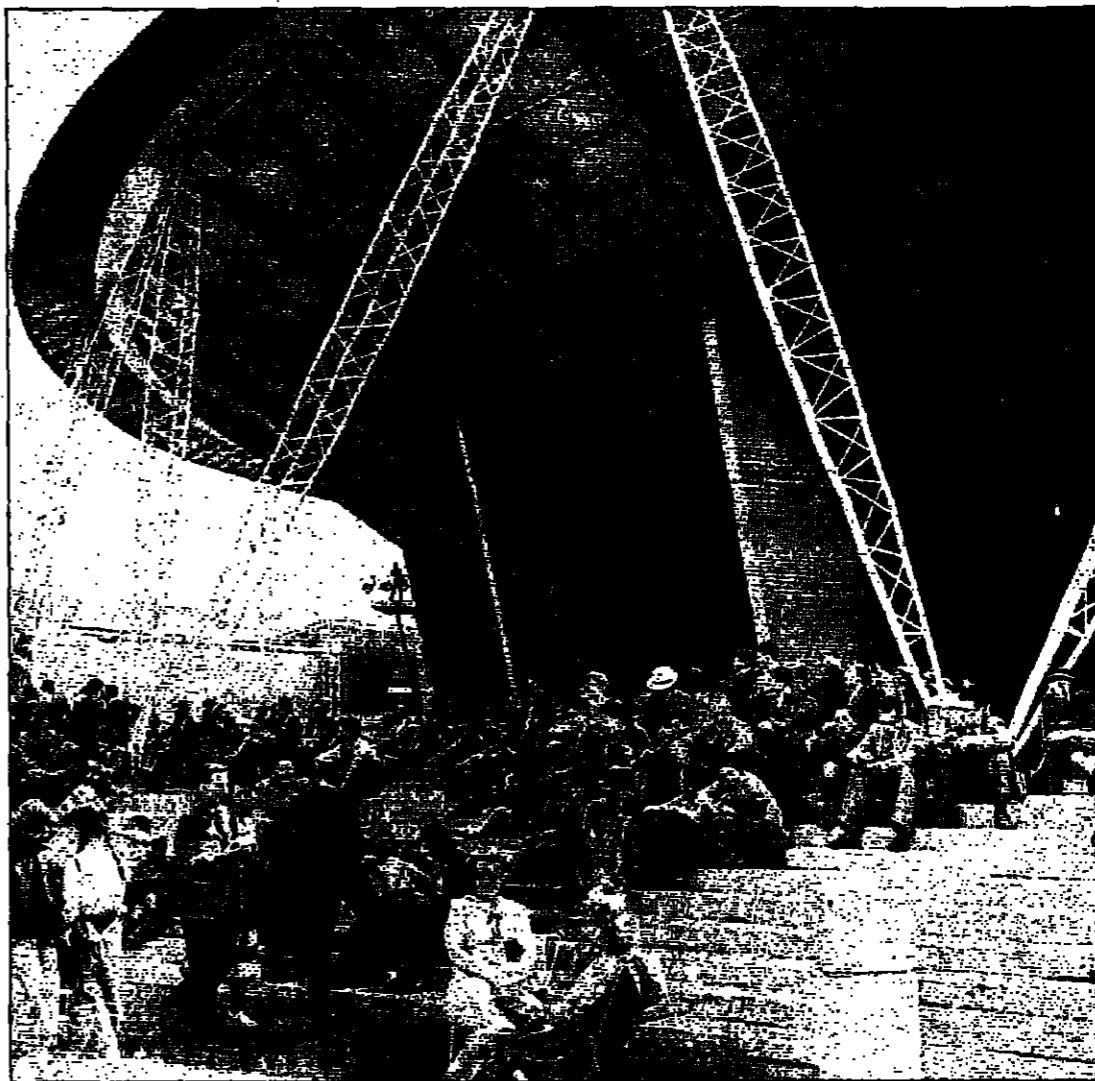
The Prince wants the millennium to eschew materialism, to be something that "originates in our hearts and not our heads", since it is the "intuitive powers of the heart that lie

at the root of all spiritual experience". Yet no sooner does the Prince enunciate his aversion to materialism than he asks for material.

He wants the Millennium Commission in which I declare an interest as a member of it to give grants to his favoured causes.

He may want a spiritual hermitage, but it is not that of Francis of Assisi, more that of Catherine the Great or the Hindu temple at Neasden. He wants millennium money to go to church, chapel, mosque and temple, and to architectural, environmental and urban renewal projects.

The irony is that whenever the Prince gives substance to his vision, it is precisely the remit which the Millennium Commission has given itself. Running down the list of proposals we find a Scottish forest, a national cycling network, an architecture centre in Manchester, an ecology park in Doncaster, the renovation of Banksy power station, parks, community halls and coastal paths without number. The commission is currently the embodiment of the Prince's oft-stated plea that new public investment should correct the



Overshadowed by the future: visitors to the 1951 Festival of Britain beneath the Dome of Discovery

environmental ravages of the past and nudge the nation towards what he would call a sustainable future.

There is a material cost to this, perhaps even a "materialism" cost, if that is how the Prince sees the lottery.

But spirituality comes free of charge. Bricks and mortar cost money and money must be paid for. The Prince's churches and cathedrals, which are already receiving lottery money.

But there are other "cathedrals" in Britain, embodiments of beauty and tradition if not of Christian faith.

There are the museums, galleries, theatres and stadiums, the parks and gardens, the towns, villages, forests and wildernesses to which the public flock in its spare time and which are already the object of millennium support.

In each of these there is a wealth of vision, if anyone would care to ask those committed to them.

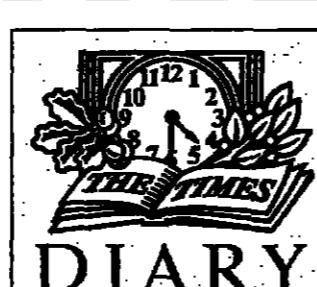
The setting up of the Millennium Commission was one of the more eccentric acts of government, as was giving it one fifth of the proceeds of the National Lottery (an estimated £1.6 billion). This was a statist ostentation rather out of character with John Major's Cabinet. As if aware of this, the Cabinet then backtracked. The commission was

forbidden to initiate projects or formulate grant applications. It could only publish criteria on which projects would be judged.

The emphasis on environmental renewal, culture and science closely accords with the Prince's known views.

In other words, the money might be public but the visions were to be many and private. The commission was to be reactive. This approach to the millennium was communitarian, non-elitist and "bottom-up". It delegated vision to the public and the bias of support reflects the public's response.

To an intellectual grandee this might seem a pity. A dose of directional elitism is useful in getting public projects built in just four years (and may yet be needed). But I am not sure the strategy was wrong. As the Prince's effort shows, a great national vision to mark the turn of the clock is a chimera. If there is to be a millennial rebirth, it will come not from princes or governments or commissions, but from within individuals and their communities. I prefer Kipling's pluralism: "There are nine and sixty ways of constructing tribal lays. And every-single-one-of-them-is-right."



the young. The new, very green, puppet co-ordinator on Spitting Image was sent to collect the latest version of Arthur Scargill from a storeroom.

"What does he look like?" she asked. The producer, Giles Pilbrow, told her: "You can't miss him, he's an old, balding, left-wing Labour politician with a grubby grey suit." She returned with Neil Kinnock.

Robbed

THE bargain of all Burns Night suppers was enjoyed by students at The Globe public house in Dundee on Thursday. The publican, Jack Cooper, was offering a square deal of haggis, tatties, neeps and "a drink of your choice" for £2 a head. Then law students spotted a bottle of the exclusive Louis Treize brandy, Churchill's favourite breakfast tipple, on the gantry and demanded the fine cognac, worth £25 a

glass, as their chosen drink. "I'd forgotten all about that bottle," wails Cooper. "I couldn't believe it when they asked for it but they started going on about the Trade Descriptions Act. I needed a measure myself to steady my nerves."

• As Tory chiefs continue to agonise over the risk of further defections, they should reassess themselves that a good dinner heals all. Among the most prominent guests at the 25th anniversary dinner on Wednesday night of the foundation of Nick's Diner — the dining club for Tories to which Sir Nicholas Scott gave his name — was Sir Christopher Brockbank-Fowler, the notorious defector to the SDP in the early Eighties. Perhaps



Emma Nicholson and Alan Howard will be back at the Tory trough ten years from now.

Hot favourite

THEY'VE found an ingenious method of warming up jockeys during the freeze at Newbury racecourse — a mechanical horse is being installed in the changing room. The contraption, known as a "ride away", aims to get cold muscles warmed up for the first race.

"All other athletes warm up and it does seem strange that we have not seen a mechanical horse at a racecourse before," says Michael Turner, the Jockey Club's chief medical officer. "I have often heard jockeys say that they are just getting warmed up by the second race — hopefully this will be a thing of the past now."

Change of step

THE Princess of Wales's daily battle with photographers and admirers at the Harbour Club in Chelsea may finally have driven her to look for somewhere else to tone her thighs. Earlier this week she was spotted sniffing around a rival establishment, Holmes Place Health Club, in Baling.

In the past the Harbour Club proved fertile ground for the Princess to meet members of the oppo-

osite sex. It is where she enjoyed post-workout fruit juices with Will Carling and Christopher Whalley, the property developer.

Staff at Holmes Place, overwhelmed by the prospect of a camp of freelance photographers setting up outside, were reluctant to discuss the Princess yesterday.

Straight Man

OFFSTAGE alarm on the Isle of Man plans for the first production of a play by Joe Orton. Although the Manx Parliament relaxed its stiff laws on homosexuality four years ago, many citizens are still horrified at any mention of the subject. The proposal by the Joe Orton Society to present *Entertaining Mr Sloane* has not gone down well.

"I think an Orton play would be received very badly here," says the Bishop of Sodor and Man, the Right Rev Noel Jones. Risqué theatre has not had a happy history on the island. Ten years ago the High Bailiff banned *Smoking*, a play for an all-female cast by Neil Dunn set inside a Turkish bath.

X-rated

LADY COGGAN, the doughty wife of the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Coggan, is prompting some furious soul-

searching among residents of Winchester over plans to retain three stone crosses on a cinema being converted from a disused church. The diet of 18-rated films planned for the picture house are deemed unsuitable.

"Christians hold the cross in deep reverence and we shall be very sad to see it used falsely in our splendid city with all its church history and background," says Lady Coggan. The dispute looks set to get bitter. The church is Grade II listed and English Heritage sides with the cinema company.

P.H.S

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HILLARY AND CHERIE

Labour lessons from the Washington jury room

Americans were treated last night to the shocking spectacle of a First Lady subpoenaed to give evidence before her peers. This was not the Republican-dominated Senate Whitewater committee but a grand jury, the beginning of a criminal procedure. Although the jurors are more likely than not to have Democrat sympathies, that may not comfort Mrs Clinton very much. Whatever evidence is presented against the woman once dubbed "Saint Hillary", her unprecedented position in the dock cannot be separated from her anomalous position in the White House. The repercussions do not stop on the Atlantic's far shores.

When Mrs Clinton — a highly successful lawyer and, by repartee, cleverer than her husband — first started to campaign nationally at his side, she seemed to many younger American women as a perfect role model. This First Lady would be allowed to do more than smile at the cameras, show off her floral arrangements or work on personnel issues behind the scenes. This was to be a working partnership — "buy one, get one free" in her husband's words. Some Americans voting for Bill Clinton did so at least as much on Hillary's behalf.

He was true to his word, even if he had to tone down the partnership message in the course of the campaign. Hillary was given one of America's knottiest problems to unravel: the provision of healthcare. While feminists cheered, more cautious souls foresaw the perils. A wife cannot be sacked; and even if she decides to "spend more time with her family", that puts no more distance between her and the levers of power.

Mrs Clinton's attempt to emulate her heroine, Eleanor Roosevelt, were disastrous. The healthcare plan, conceived in secret, was quickly revealed as unworkable. Then began another of Hillary's regular renovations: as mother, ambassador and "First Lady of Hearts". That was soon scuppered by more revelations about old Arkansas business deals, alleged cover-ups and favouring of cronies for White House contracts, which led finally to yesterday's

grand jury appearance. Mrs Clinton's hypocrisy has contributed solidly to her fate. She and her husband campaigned against the excess profit culture of the Eighties yet unaccountably managed to convert \$1,000 to \$100,000 in the space of nine months. They campaigned against sleaze; yet she had worked for a savings and loan institution involved in disreputable property deals and may have been less than frank about exactly how much work she did. They claimed to stand up for those who worked hard and played by the rules, yet she sacked seven well-regarded members of the White House travel office and replaced them with friends and relatives.

But the hostility towards her has been compounded by the unease which many Americans feel about a First Lady being both a career woman and a political adviser to her husband. This is what must alarm Cherie Blair. If Tony Blair becomes Prime Minister, Britain will experience the same step-change that took place in Washington. Out will go the wife who loves charity and opera; in will come a former parliamentary candidate, campaigner for equal rights and successful lawyer. The parallels should make anyone wary.

Of course Mrs Blair — or Ms Booth as she likes to be known — has been found guilty neither of hypocrisy nor sleaze. And in Britain's parliamentary system, it would be hard for her husband to give her as much political power as Mr Clinton gave his wife. Nor does she seem to want it. But potential pitfalls abound. Under the "cab-rank" principle which governs barristers' briefs, there would be occasions when even her legal practice provided embarrassments.

The world has changed, and Britain will have to come to terms with Prime Ministers' wives having careers. But, as the first of her kind, Ms Booth would come under great pressure and be subject to criticism however much or little she says. This is unfortunate but probably unavoidable. Ms Booth may be asked to blaze a trail for her successors — and through prickly branches.

PRIMARY POWER

Tests and vouchers should improve standards

The state of our schools has been thrown into sharper relief after a week which can leave few feeling complacent. The electorate has been left with an enduring impression of Labour's incoherence; but there is little room for Tory satisfaction when 16 years of reform still leaves half of our 11-year-olds unable to reach the required standard in English and maths. The failure rests not with our children but with methods of managing schools and teaching pupils that need, not stability, but still more radical change.

Parents nostalgic for traditional practice, and teachers stretched by innovation, might yearn for a period of consolidation. That would be an abdication of responsibility towards the children whom the system fails.

Were it not for one bitterly contested change, the tests themselves, we would still be ignorant of how poorly served pupils are. The self-interest of the teachers who opposed the tests does not make it easy to sympathise with the profession; but because many were wrong in the past that does not mean they are all in error now. Their suggestions for refining the examinations deserve attention if a successful innovation is to become entrenched. Tests not only diagnose failure, they can help to remedy it. Improved results in the longer-established tests for seven and 14-year-olds proves what any honest teacher has to admit: examinations concentrate minds and scrutiny improves standards.

That insight should inform the next step Gillian Shephard must take. She should ignore the bleatings of head teachers and publish primary league tables. John Redwood has well argued how that would make it easier to judge all schools fairly. Gauging the quality of a school's intakes and measuring any subsequent change could allow

parents to see what improves performance at each stage. Best practice would be better informed and emulated.

What constitutes best practice may still be a battleground. But it seems unlikely that the evidence will give comfort to the progressive theorists whose spirit still stalks our university and college departments of education. Harriet Harman and Tony Blair have demonstrated what every good parent knows. A school which teaches traditionally, puts pupils in uniform and has ordered classes, whatever their size, is the best guarantee of a good education.

The other guarantee is an early start. *Counting to Five*, a report published yesterday by the Audit Commission, argues that nursery education can radically improve children's performance at school. Unfortunately, with nursery provision so patchy, access to this advantage is, according to the Audit Commission, almost a lottery.

The most effective way of ensuring that new provision emerges and existing nurseries are kept effective is to empower parents. The Government's nursery voucher scheme will make it easier for demand to be satisfied in areas where local authorities have abdicated their responsibilities. It will also encourage the competition which drives down costs and raises standards.

To invest in pupils, not the system, is to encourage diversity and excellence in pre-school education. That is a lesson too important to be restricted to the nursery. If standards are to be driven upwards, the engine of change has to be informed parental choice. Ministers should hasten to give parents, through tests and vouchers, as much power as possible now: a future government could reverse the revolution.

GREY POLAR BEARS

Forget the sunbelt: find a bracing old age in Essex

The Essex coast, it seems, is scheduled to become the new Florida. As our health correspondent reports on page 8, the United Kingdom's first retirement lager for veterans of the Third Age is to be built there. Like similar "sun cities" in Florida and South Africa, it is to be exclusively for those stroked as grey panthers by estate agents' euphemism.

So it will have hundreds of "close-care apartments", a large nursing home, a 70-bed hospital, shops and services of all sorts, and a "therapeutic golf course for the mature golfer". Electric rakes, by the bunkers? Shrimping-nets to retrieve balls? Inhabitants need never leave Thorpe Hall again on two feet. And if they were to venture into the world outside, the nearest town for all ages is Frinton-on-Sea, which bans fish-and-chip shops and may be rather less lively than this new "lifetime care" complex at Thorpe le Soken.

Whether the Utopian idea of happy-valley ghettos will catch on in Britain is going to be tested. As many 80-year-old Britons as Americans may feel like 20-year-olds. But the British grey wolves may prefer to have some 20-year-olds around. To judge from cruises and blue-rinse bus tours, the British in their maturity are less team-players than Americans. Although, sadly, increasing numbers of our old are increasingly shut

away out of sight, out of mind, in nursing homes, the British ideal is still to try to keep the seven ages of man together, to take in the other ages' baby-sitting, spectacle-searching and changing of the video.

And the choice of Essex for Britain's first sun city may be surprising to some. The weathermen may calculate that East Anglia receives more than the national average of sunshine under its Constable skies. But all East Coast resorts face facts as well as the North Sea. Some even advertise themselves as "bracing", with pictures of ruddy fishermen in oilskins and sou'westers. As a poet once advised outsiders, "the bleak flat, sedgy shores of Essex shun, Where fog perpetual veils the winter sun". Unkind, and only partially true.

Thorpe le Soken does not have the blue seas and cloudless skies of Cloud-Cuckoo-Land. But Florida sun causes wrinkles, and worse those who would not be called wrinkles, beware. Essex weather refreshes the juices better than withering sun. From Dickens to Graham Swift, from Essex thatches and flint towers to the roaring North Sea shingle, Essex men and women have a reputation for longevity and red-faced stubbornness. The county is a fine choice for our first sun city. But as a precaution, the residents should take their thermal leg-warmers.

Failure to tackle global warming

From Dr R. Russell Jones

Sir, The findings of the British Antarctic Survey (report, January 25), that over half the Antarctic ice sheets have disintegrated during the past 50 years, provides further evidence of global warming and verifies the computer models which match current temperature trends precisely and predict far greater changes in the next century.

Worldwide, 1995 was the hottest year on record. Yet society's response to these events is curiously ambivalent. Water companies claim that severe droughts are freak occurrences which are only expected to occur once every 300 years. In fact they will become increasingly common. The UK Government argues unsuccessfully for a 10 per cent reduction in emissions of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, whilst failing to admit that a reduction of over 60 per cent is needed just to stabilise atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide.

In Coventry (reports, January 18; letter, January 24) the Church celebrates 100 years of the motor car, the fastest-growing contributor to global warming, and possibly the single greatest threat to God's creation.

The ecosystems which sustain life are extremely vulnerable, and our priorities will need to change radically if they are to survive.

Yours faithfully,
R. RUSSELL JONES,
St Thomas' Hospital,
Lambeth Palace Road, SE1.
January 25

Monetary union

From Mr William Cash, MP for Stafford (Conservative)

Sir, The Spanish Foreign Minister, Carlos Westendorp, who was chairman of the Reflection Group which prepared the way for this year's inter-governmental conference (IGC), has said that it would be ill-advised to proceed with the 1999 timetable for economic and monetary union (report, January 24). If the timetable does have to be revised then that will require amending the Maastricht treaty (as will the change of name from ECU to euro and any changes to the ERM).

It is therefore important that we include the whole question of economic and monetary union in the forthcoming White Paper on the IGC (report, January 24). It would be extraordinary if we did not declare the principles behind our opt-out on the single currency, given the fact that the purpose of the single currency is to create political union — an objective the Prime Minister has already rejected.

Senor Westendorp said last year that every aspect of the Community can be renegotiated at the IGC. In addition to the single currency, agriculture, fisheries, the budget and the European Court should head the agenda and therefore also be addressed in the White Paper.

Our present problems stem from the fact that at Maastricht we allowed the other member states to go ahead with a legal framework which we agreed we would not veto. We must not make the same mistake again. The White Paper must provide the basis for a serious debate on this country's national interests and how they can be best served. Without this and without a proper renegotiation of Maastricht we will be left with uncertainty and instability, which will be in nobody's interests.

Yours faithfully,
BILL CASH (Chairman),
The European Foundation,
61 Pall Mall, SW1.

Living languages

From Mr Norman Berdichevsky

Sir, Your editorial, "Silent thunder" (January 17), contrasts Esperanto — "without a people to sustain it... the property of a few" — with the proud struggle of the Welsh people to preserve their language.

The latest census study in 1991 reports that almost 550,000 people are able either to speak, read or write Welsh (A *Geography of the Welsh Language 1991-1991*, J. Aitchison and H. Carter, University of Wales Press, 1994).

This accounts for the fact that Welsh does not appear in the lists of the principal languages of the world published every year in *The World Almanac and Book of Facts* (Scripps Howard). This same reference work has consistently listed Esperanto and recently upped its estimate of users from one to two million.

The failure to acknowledge Esperanto as a living language is particularly glaring in the English-speaking world precisely because English has, as you put it, "helped to sweep so many other languages out of the way".

Esperanto is a non-ethnic and non-territorial language, and therefore not very visible, but it is sustained by an international community of speakers who have diffused it throughout the world over 100 years. Esperanto is alive and growing, especially in China, Japan and Korea, which may account for the myopic view frequently expressed in Britain that it has "failed".

Yours faithfully,
NORMAN BERDICHESKY,
69 Methuen Road,
Edgware, Middlesex.
January 18

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Understanding forgiveness, and trying to practise it

From Canon Paul Oestreicher

Sir, Does Matthew Parris (article, January 22) really want to know "how on earth" to practise forgiveness? There are more than enough examples. Nor do Christians have any monopoly. Like others, they often fail to practise what they preach.

Forgiveness is the banishing of bitterness for wrongs suffered and the refusal to pay back evil with evil. It has nothing to do with the banishing of memory. "Forgive and forget" is no Christian slogan. "Remember and forgive" is.

For Christians, Jesus sets the pattern in praying for his own executioners: "Father forgive them..." This was the response of Gordon Wilson when IRA killers murdered his daughter. This was the response of Dr Sheila Cassidy to her Chilean torturers. Forgiveness, offered and sought, in small things and great, is the love-bond that holds marriages together. Forgiveness does not condone evil, but refuses to be embittered by it. It breaks the vicious circle of hate.

The "hurt" file is indeed "not open for edit", but the victim's bloodstream need not be poisoned by it. The recognition of our need to forgive was, this week, at the heart of the prayer of 13-year-old Unity Lawrence (report, January 23) at the memorial service for her murdered father: "May we find the strength to overcome anger with love." Hard, yes, but possible and liberating.

Yours sincerely,
PAUL OESTREICHER
(Director of International Ministry,
Coveney Cathedral,
7 Priory Row,
Coveney, West Midlands.
January 25)

From Mr Richard Ritchie

Sir, In his strictures upon the Christian concept of forgiveness Matthew Parris is coming perilously close to

Union stakes in new Labour society

From Mr Robert Harvey

Sir, John Monks ("The TUC's stake in Mr Blair", January 17) is looking forward to a Tony Blair government which will help to rebuild the unions' influence, in order to "make this country more competitive, community-minded and caring".

These are presumably the same unions whose "competitiveness" nearly bled the printing industry to death ten years ago (having already succeeded in doing so with the car industry), and whose "community spirit" and "caring" nature in the 1970s left the dead unburied and the lights flickering for only three days a week.

Of course, I'm forgetting, that was a long time ago, and they've completely changed. Frankly, I agree with Gillian Shephard, whom you quote on the same day, that the only thing to have changed would be the substitution of smoked salmon and dry white wine for beer and sandwiches at No 10.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT HARVEY,
Forest House, Birmingham Road,
Henley-in-Arden, Warwickshire.
January 17

From Professor Roger Dyson

Sir, The answer to the questions raised on your letters page (January 5, 11, 13, 17) as to the meaning of Tony Blair's "stakeholder society" is, in my view, factual and quite straightforward.

John Prescott has pledged to make

Ducks and cormorants

From Mr Peter Giffard

Sir, There is a good deal of confusion about the ruddy duck (letter, January 22). Not everyone sees it as a pest to be exterminated. I have visitors here on open days who go for a walk around the lake created by Capability Brown and come back and ask what is the lovely little duck with the blue beak. Some people only come in order to see them. They are not bird experts but ordinary townspersons here to enjoy the White Paper.

I wish English Nature and the Secretary of State for the Environment and the Minister of Agriculture would get together and give as much consideration to the plight of the fish in my lake as they have been to the white-headed duck.

The lake has never been stocked with fish, at least to my knowledge,

that mortal sin of columnists, which is to parade their ignorance — or, as he describes it "guesswork" — in order to indulge their prejudices.

It is Christian forgiveness is not difficult to understand. It means that, however much someone has wronged you and however much you may wish never to see him again, you still pray for his soul. It is not for us to consign anyone to Hell.

That does not mean you have to like everyone, invite them to supper, or even not punish them when necessary; simply "to pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death". Often not easy, but reasonably straightforward.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD RITCHIE,
36 Dault Road,
Wandsworth, SW18.
January 22

From Mr Peter Robinson

Sir, I heard recently of a little girl who had to have both legs amputated.

When asked by the surgeon whether she could forgive him, the girl nodded.

Matthew Parris' article made no reference to anyone's need for forgiveness. He has sought to illustrate the defects of Christianity. Perhaps all he has done is to highlight the poverty of his own emotional and spiritual life.

Yours sincerely,
PETER ROBINSON,
Valleco, Fir Tree Close,
Coppleshaw, Staffordshire.
January 23

From Mr Harry Creswell

Sir, Matthew Parris is quite correct when he implies that the act of forgiveness is something very difficult to achieve. Only God has the power and grace to release us from our sins.

However, when we hurt or offend others we can either "make up" (forgive) or bear resentment, holding on to the slight against us. The former is

more likely to lead to peace and happiness for both parties. Is not this, therefore, the better and more gracious course of action and is this not what is meant by forgiving one another? For, unless we do, I believe that God cannot forgive us.

Yours faithfully,
HARRY CRESWELL,
Warren Wood,
Wimland Road, Faygate, Sussex.
January 23

From Mr Richard Gunning

Sir, Christians are not required to like their enemies, nor to *forgive* wrongs done. No person is that perfect, or stupid. Christians are, though, expected to refrain from retaliation, seek reconciliation (where allowed) and not keep score.

Of course, all Christians fall short of these ideals, for which they need ongoing forgiveness. Mr Parris may also

OBITUARIES

ARTHUR MARTIN

Arthur Martin, CBE, a member of the Security Service, 1946-64, and an officer with the Secret Intelligence Service, 1964-69, died on January 10 aged 81. He was born on February 15, 1914.

ARTHUR MARTIN spent most of his working life in counter-espionage. He first became a molehunter extraordinaire at a period in MI5's history when the suspicions of hidden traitors were tearing the service apart. He was unrelenting in his search for clues that might have led to the exposure of undiscovered Soviet penetration.

A former CIA officer once said of him that he held a PhD in counter-intelligence, while the rest were "mere Bachelors". His reputation was awesome. He played a part in uncovering the treachery of many of the Soviet moles in the 1950s and 1960s, including Kim Philby and Klaus Fuchs, the atoms secret spy.

While Peter Wright, a fellow molehunter from the same era, was subsequently to achieve notoriety as the dedicated spycatcher, Martin was perhaps the key figure whose legendary counter-espionage skills were called on to root out the moles who had been buried for so long in the British intelligence community.

In his book, *Spycatcher* (1987), Wright described Martin as a brilliant and innovative case officer. He also said that Martin had one huge advantage in his approach to counter-espionage work: he did not attend public school. Martin was a grammar school boy.

Arthur Sydney Martin joined the Security Service in 1946 after serving for six years with the highly secret agency, the Radio Security Service (RSS), which was responsible worldwide for the identification and interception of enemy wireless communications.

During his time as an army signals officer with the RSS, he served in Egypt, Libya and Italy as well as the United Kingdom before being demobilised in June 1946 with the rank of major.

Between 1946 and 1952 he was concerned principally with analysis of intelligence which led to the identification and conviction of the German-born physician who had been recruited to the American Manhattan Project from Britain, and to the identification of Donald Maclean as a Soviet agent.

Martin was also case officer in the investigation of Kim Philby as a suspected Soviet agent. He prepared the interview brief which led to



Philby's resignation from the Secret Service (SIS) in September 1950. He was also involved when, in 1963 in Beirut, Philby confessed to being a long-term Soviet spy before escaping to Moscow.

The defection of Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean had cast immediate doubt on Philby's loyalty and Martin was among those in MI5 who feared he was a traitor. Philby, who was chief liaison officer between MI6 and the CIA and FBI, was interrogated in November 1951. Martin was present although the main interrogator was "Buster" Milmo, a wartime MI5 officer who had become a barrister and then a judge. Philby's performance convinced both men that he was the Third Man who tipped off Maclean that he was about to be arrested.

Wright claimed that Martin pressed

the management of MI5 to sanction urgent inquiries into the whole complex network of communist infiltrations of Cambridge in the 1930s but that his requests for permission to interview members of the Philby, Burgess and Maclean social circles were mostly refused. He found this frustrating because he was convinced that Soviet penetration had been underestimated.

St Dick White, then Director-General of MI5, had enormously high regard for Martin and he sent him to Malaya as MI5 security liaison officer. This proved to be a crucial job for Martin who played a leading role in the successful counter-insurgency campaign in Malaya. He reorganised the Special Branch organisation in the struggle with communist insurgents. In 1959 he returned to the counter-

espionage field and was head of the Soviet section in 1960, a post he held with distinction until November 1964. He was leader of the teams of investigators who, after ten months of skilful inquiries, brought about the arrest and conviction of the Soviet spies Gordon Lonsdale, Harry Houghton and Ethel Gee in 1961 and of John Vassall in 1962.

Martin had a reputation for finding the hidden answers and questions that lay in files. He reopened the files on the unresolved investigations into Soviet penetration of British Intelligence since 1951, and was at the heart of the inquiries which began in great secrecy after suspicions arose about the highest-ranking officers in MI5, Sir Roger Hollis who became Director-General in 1956, and his deputy, Graham Mitchell.

Martin served on the Fluency Committee, a joint MI5/MI6 committee which was charged with examining every possible line that might lead to the uncovering of another mole. It was chaired by Peter Wright and included Martin and Evelyn McNabrett, described as MI5's queen of the registry.

No evidence was found against either Hollis or Mitchell. But Martin remained convinced that further inquiries were justified. In 1964 Sir Anthony Blunt was exposed (though not yet publicly) as a long-standing Soviet spy. In April of that year, it was Martin who was authorised to confront Blunt and offer him immunity in return for his confession.

But Martin's insistence that the molehunting should continue was not shared by everyone, particularly Hollis, who at one point suspended him. In 1984 Martin wrote to *The Times* saying that, while Hollis fitted the circumstantial evidence more closely than other candidate, the case against him was not conclusive.

After his disagreement with Hollis, Martin turned to Sir Dick White, who by then was chief of SIS. White recruited him to join SIS and he swapped services in November 1964 and stayed with SIS until his retirement in 1969.

Martin was appointed CBE in 1953

and after his retirement from the intelligence world, he worked for some years as an assistant to the Clerk of Committees in the House of Lords.

Arthur Martin had two sons by his first wife, Joan Harrow, whom he married in 1938. He lived in retirement for many years with his second wife, Joan, née Russell King, who survives him.

JOHN LOWE

John Lowe, musician and musical administrator, died on January 5 aged 89. He was born on October 31, 1906.

JOHN LOWE will be remembered particularly for his achievements in setting up the BBC Third Programme Music Department after the war and in directing the Coventry Festival for the consecration of the rebuilt Coventry Cathedral in 1962.

Born in Grantham, John Stanley Lowe studied music at Cambridge. After a spell as a music teacher at Eastbourne College, he became Director of Music at Homerton College in Cambridge. While working there, he was also a tireless and dedicated conductor of the *Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra* and Chorus. Those who heard them still speak of performances of Bach's B Minor Mass with the then relatively unknown Kathleen Ferrier and Peter Pears, and of Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* with Kathleen Ferrier as the Angel.

In 1947 John Lowe joined the BBC as Director of Music for the Third Programme, where he set the pattern for the future. He organised concerts conducted by Richard Strauss and Toscanini, pioneered series devoted to early music, and gave opportunities to leading young musicians such as Benjamin Britten.

In 1950 he moved to the Midland Region of the BBC, where he ran the Music Department until 1961. His time there is still remembered for the development of the BBC Midland Orchestra and Chorus, and for series of concerts devoted to the music of Vaughan Williams and Edmund Rubbra. He played an active part in Birmingham's musical life, collaborating



John Lowe, conducting the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in the 1950s

closely with Rudolph Schwarz, conductor of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra at the time.

His next move was to the directorship of the 1962 Coventry Festival. This was a triumphant success, involving the commissioning and performing of many new works, most notably Michael Tippett's opera *King Priam* and Britten's *War Requiem*, in which the Russian soprano Galina Vishnevskaya, the German baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and the English tenor Peter Pears sang together to symbolise reconciliation and peace.

Lowe was a devout Roman Catholic and during his time in Birmingham contributed strongly to the city's Catholic life as Director of Music at the Birmingham Oratory. He was also a devoted family man,

LEONARD McNAE

L. C. J. McNae, journalist and textbook editor, died on January 1 aged 93. He was born on December 28, 1902.

LEONARD McNAE gave his name to the reference book that in many newsrooms has become the "bible" consulted whenever legal queries arise. Generations of journalism trainees have grappled their teeth to study McNae's *Essential Law for Journalists* because it is the required textbook for the national training scheme and later, as seniors and editors, have come to rely on it as a familiar prop.

The book had its origins in 1938 in a volume *The Pressman and the Law* produced by G. F. L. Bridgeman of the Middle Temple for the National Union of Journalists (NUJ). Towards the end of the Second World War, Bridgeman revised the material for a correspondence course produced for journalists in the Forces about to return to civilian life.

By 1953, however, the course needed drastic revision and amplification as a result of changes in the administration of criminal justice and the structure of local government. It was taken over by the recently formed National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ), and the task of revision was shouldered by McNae, then an executive in the sub-editors department of the Press Association and later news editor, then editor, of its special reporting service. The legal material in the course was published as a book in 1954 by Staples Press under the title *Essential Law for Journalists*.

McNae ceased to edit new editions of the book when he retired from the Press Association in 1967, but continued to take a keen interest, attending as an honoured guest of Butterworths, the publishers, and of the launches of successive editions until last year, when he was kept away



from the event by Alzheimer's disease.

A pleasing but probably apocryphal story tells of a judge who was referred to the work of "McNae L. C. J." and who promptly replied he could not recall a Lord Chief Justice of that name. Indeed, McNae had no formal legal training but he was ideally placed in his work for the special reporting service to study the legal problems faced by journalists in particular in their work of reporting a great variety of court, tribunals and authorities.

In 1962, when the NUJ bestowed honorary membership on McNae for his work on the book, the citation recorded the monumental task of editorship which required "many dreary nights of research in the PA library and more hours of painstaking research at home", typically painstaking, said the citation, the self-effacing McNae did thoroughly whatever job he undertook.

He had also the help of a team of newspapermen and others who attached great importance to the training of journalists. Among them was the youthful lawyer Peter Carter-Ruck, who contributed the chapters on defamation (and

as an able journalist. As an executive, he inspired awe among his younger staff because of his high professional standards and also because of a rather austere manner that may have resulted from his hearing difficulty. He worked people hard but was kindly to those in trouble. He became editor of the special reporting service in 1956, playing an important part in the establishment of this valuable service, and retired in 1967. In retirement in Richmond he was active as a Freemason and as a Rotarian; for some 14 years was secretary of the Richmond Philanthropic Society, which gives instant help to people in need. He was a founder member of the Richmond Parish Lands Committee, concerned with the development for the people of the Borough of Richmond of lands given by George III.

In 1928 he married Freda Ager, and he is survived by his wife, a son and two daughters.

DUANE HANSON

up his sculptures with polyester resin and fibreglass, using an airbrush for the flesh colour, a durable acrylic for the eyes and often real hair on the head.

But it was observation rather than technique which interested him. His attention to detail was fanatical. He would labour over whole areas of skin later to be concealed under the clothing. And the clothes themselves were given painstaking attention — polyester fashions, winged sunglasses, vinyl bags — all were carefully chosen to reflect the subject's character and convey a social milieu. Verisimilitude was taken to an extreme. In museums all over the world curators still daily wind the wristwatches of Hanson's sculptures and cackle over anecdotes of visitors duped by an almost hallucinatory mimicry.

Duane Elwood Hanson began his career as an abstract artist, supplementing a meagre income by teaching, first in America and then in Europe. It was in Germany that he was given his first one-man show in 1952. But it was only with the Pop art explosion of the Sixties, and its popularisation of vernacular imagery, that Hanson really found his subject.



Tourists by Duane Hanson

However, where Pop tended to focus on idealised aspects of American society, Hanson's

realism, when it initially emerged, was awkwardly horrific and aggressively political.

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SATURDAY TIMES



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simply will not
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THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY JANUARY 27 1996

Sainsbury shares hit by profit warning

BY SARAH BAGNALL

SAINSBURY'S warned shareholders yesterday that it expects its first drop in profits in 20 years as a public company.

David Sainsbury, chairman of the supermarket group, said that full-year profits would fail to match City expectations, sending the shares 21½p lower to 389p as analysts slashed their forecasts.

In the past year Sainsbury's market share has been eroded and the food retailer has been ousted from the number one slot by Tesco. In an attempt to reinstate itself as Britain's largest supermarket group Sainsbury is to invest millions in customer service and advertising.

Mr Sainsbury said: "Our commitment to enhancing customer service and price competitiveness, together with increased advertising, will reduce profit in the current financial year below earlier expectations."

Sainsbury has hired an extra 2,500 staff in a bid to improve customer service in stores. This will add about £10 million to second-half costs, while increased advertising aimed at communicating more effectively the group's pricing position will cost a further £10 million. In addition, the second-half gross margin is expected to slide as Sainsbury pushes ahead with its pricing promotions.

Analysts cut their forecasts for profits for the year to March 12 from as high as £825 million to about £760 million. The fall in share price was limited, however, by the City's relief that Sainsbury finally appears to be tackling its

problems. Philip Dorgan, an analyst at Societe General Strauss Turnbull, said: "If there is such a thing as a good profit warning then this is one because they are investing in areas that need improving."

Tony MacNairy, an analyst at NatWest Securities, has cut his forecast from £787 million, which was at the bottom of the range of forecasts, to £760 million. He said it was too early to tell whether more action would be needed to rectify Sainsbury's position.

Mr Sainsbury said the group's objective was to reclaim the title as Britain's largest food retailer but that the goal would not be achieved by the end of the year.

Like-for-like sales rose 4.5 per cent in the six weeks to January 13, a pick-up in activity that helped underlying sales rise by 3 per cent in the 16 weeks to mid-January. This compares to Tesco's 8.5 per cent advance in like-for-like sales over a similar period.

The supermarket business accounts for about 80 per cent of group sales.

Mr Sainsbury said: "We had a record Christmas and importantly the sales growth has moved up a notch. So we are moving in the right direction." The group intends to introduce further promotions.

The chairman said: "I am extremely optimistic about our competitive position. Customers have responded well to our January Savers promotion and so we intend to extend it. We have done promotions in the past but none at this strength in either price or communication."

Tempus, page 28



Store wars: David Sainsbury, who has promised to extend price promotions

still improving

SAINSBURY'S Where good food costs less

GOOD FOOD CO

CBI chief defends stance on pay

BY PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

ADAIR TURNER, head of the Confederation of British Industry, yesterday insisted that economic growth in Britain would lead to rising real incomes for employees and dismissed the charge that he is advocating a pay free-for-all.

The Director-General of the CBI strongly defended his claim that real wages will rise over the longer term, provided productivity and profitability also increase. Mr Turner maintained that rising real wages are both essential to and an inevitable consequence of the economic growth everyone wanted.

The outcry over his statements on pay made in a speech this week has prompted the CBI to write to member companies to explain his position.

Mr Turner had said that new forms of pay determination, including profit-related and performance-related pay, linked employees more closely to their companies. He jocularly suggested that employees would become "dare I say it, stakeholders" - a clear, if light, reference to the stakeholders idea being promoted by Labour leader Tony Blair.

Labour and the unions welcomed Mr Turner's words, angering ministers who saw it as business giving greater support to Labour than it should.

In its weekly bulletin to members, the CBI spelled out in detail precisely what Mr Turner is saying on pay. However, CBI insiders insisted this did not constitute either an apology or a retraction.

Mr Turner told *The Times* his remarks were about pay in the future, in the medium term, and did not relate to the current wage round. He insisted that economic growth would and should lead to higher real wages, adding that he did not believe it was "contentious" that real wages would increase with economic growth, though he said it was vital to avoid any return to a pay-price spiral.

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A-Z
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PORTFOLIO

BUSINESS TODAY

Planemakers plan super-jumbo jets

BY ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

STOCK MARKET	
FT-SE 100	3734.7 (+0.5)
Yield	3.82%
FT-SE All share	1828.69 (+0.22)
Nikkei	20633.84 (+248.15)
New York	5242.12 (2.40)
Comex	5240.78 (+2.03)
S&P Composite	619.06 (+2.03)
US Nasdaq	1100.00 (+1.00)
Federal Funds	5.50% (5.50%)
Long Bond	110.45 (110.50)
Yield	6.10% (6.15%)
STOCK MARKET	
FT-SE 100	3734.7 (+0.5)
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US Nasdaq	1100.00 (+1.00)
Federal Funds	5.50% (5.50%)
Long Bond	110.45 (110.50)
Yield	6.10% (6.15%)
FOREIGN EXCHANGE	
3-month Interbank	6.50% (6.50%)
100-day Gilt future (Mar)	110.45 (111.50)
US STOCKS	
New York	1500.00 (1500.00)
London	1500.00 (1500.00)
S	1500.00 (1500.00)
DM	1240.00 (1240.00)
FRF	1180.00 (1180.00)
SFR	1180.00 (1180.00)
Yen	106.35 (106.35)
£ Index	95.65 (95.65)
FOREIGN EXCHANGE	
London	1.4910/10 (1.4900/10)
FTY	5.1250/50 (5.1075/50)
SFT	1.2072/72 (1.1975/75)
Yen	106.35/35 (106.35/35)
£ Index	95.65/65 (95.65/65)
FOREIGN EXCHANGE	
Tokyo close Yen	106.80
Brst 15-day (Apr)	916.10 (916.20)
London close	3406.25 (3407.05)
<small>* denotes midday trading price</small>	

Plug pulled

Life pulled the plug on its new £2 million after-hours options trading system just 15 minutes into its debut because of severe faults. The system will not now be available for several weeks.



Galley: index hope

FORTE faces the ignominy of being replaced in the FT-SE 100 next week by Mercury Asset Management, the fund management company that helped to end its existence as an independent company.

The FT-SE actuaries index committee, which controls the make-up of the index, yesterday said that Forte will be replaced by the single largest company outside the FT-SE 100 at close of business on January 30. MAM, with a market value of £1.61 billion, is one of five companies in a position to replace Forte. However, MAM, of which Carol Galley is vice-chairman, will need a sharp rise in its share price to guarantee promotion to the

FT-SE 100. Greenalls, the pub chain, was valued at £1.75 billion at yesterday's close. Others in the running include Next, the clothing retailer, which is valued at £1.7 billion, MEPC, the property group, valued at £1.66 billion, and Anglian Water (£1.52 billion).

A place in the FT-SE 100 not only gives companies a higher profile, but boosts the share price, because index-tracker funds, which hold a stake in every FT-SE 100 company, need to buy into it.

In the most recent shake-up of the index, last month, Arjo Wiggin's Appleton, Midlands Electricity and Inchcape left. To prevent constant flux in the index

companies close to 100th in value are allowed a little latitude in their market price and can fall to 11th before being automatically removed. A company outside the FT-SE 100 must climb to 9th in value before automatic inclusion.

Granada yesterday placed 26 million shares in the market, equivalent to 4.4 per cent of its total capital, through ABN Amro Hoare Govett and BZW. The £180 million placement, a technical adjustment to run down the company's 9.9 per cent stake in Forte, was made at 693p. Market-makers said there were plenty of institutional buyers, and Granada's price closed up 10p, at 714p.

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

Fund manager is contender for vacancy in FT-SE 100

MAM may replace Forte on menu

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

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PORTFOLIO

Realisations from Maxwell's private empire top £700m

The Maxwell affair rumbles inexorably on. A week ago the headlines read: "Maxwell Brothers cleared". Such was the outcome of the 131-day trial presided over by Lord Justice Phillips: a case that is estimated to have cost taxpayers the thick end of £30 million. Today heralds somewhat different headlines. Kevin Maxwell and Larry Trachtenberg are to go through the hoop again, this time in respect of alleged conspiracy to defraud banks in relation to shares in Berlitz International, the language enterprise. They will be joined as defendants by Albert Fuller, the ex-head of MCC's Treasury. Michael Stoney, a former director of MGN, faces two charges of false accounting.

In the wake of Maxwell Trial 1, *The Times* published a five-part series — Hunt for the Missing Millions — which analysed Arthur Andersen's administration of Robert Maxwell's private empire. Legal wheels grind on as do the wheels of the largest and most complex corporate recovery operation ever undertaken in the UK. It is more than four years

since Robert Maxwell's sprawling business empire, set against a Pyrenees of debt, came under the control of Arthur Andersen's joint administrators led by John Talbot. During that time, more than 250,000 man-hours have been clocked up on the realisation of assets, the international investigation of Maxwell's corporate legacy, and the agreement of creditors' claims.

Robert Maxwell's controversial business practices have made global headlines but, until now, the administration, that started in December 1991, has received minimal publicity. Talbot is a low-profile operator, much in keeping with the *ambience* at Arthur Andersen, which sports a logo that makes the most of two closed doors.

Much of the core investigative work carried out by Arthur Andersen's special unit, dubbed "the untouchables", was completed by the summer of 1992. Major claims were identified and the emphasis progressed towards negotiated settlements or, failing that, litigation.

The investigation unit, spearheaded by Chris Currington and

Leonie Grimes, also provided information to the authorities. This included liaison with MPs, Commons select committees, the Serious Fraud Office, engaged in a multi-faced probe into Robert Maxwell's curiosity shop, and Department of Trade and Industry inspectors. It was in June 1992 that the DTI appointed John Thomas QC and accountant Raymond Turner to investigate and report on the "affairs and membership" of MGN — particularly affairs pertaining to the previous year's "ring-fenced" flotation. Maxwell Trial 1 has served to delay publication of the DTI report which, presumably, will be further delayed by yesterday's developments.

It was in the autumn of 1992 that Talbot informed the Commons Social Security Select Committee, chaired by Frank Field, the Labour MP, that realisations at end-July amounted to £110 million. Some 52 of 55 trading businesses had been sold. Administration and legal fees amounted to £6 million and £5 million respectively — 10 per cent of the proceeds. In addition to this, the investigative work had yielded



MELVYN MARCUS

recoveries of some £4 million at a cost of around £400,000. The select committee, in a subsequent 30-page report, stated that "unravelling the chaos and confusion left by Robert Maxwell" had so far cost creditors, including the pensioners, some £50 million. In the opinion of Field and his colleagues: "The total cost could exceed £100 million." It was also disclosed that despite the select committee's repeated requests for information concerning fees from various administrators,

only Talbot had responded in detail.

Tony Brierley, another administrator, emphasises that the vast majority of asset realisations have been completed. In his words: "The assets that I dealt with in Eastern Europe required considerable patience. Almost the only assets that remain are property, based in the UK."

Maxwell's empire was long on property assets. Peter Tuch, the Arthur Andersen partner who acted as central co-ordinator to the entire administration, says: "We adopt an owner's mentality to property assignments and take a long-term view. By managing the projects ourselves we find that we are able to control costs and maximise site value, as has been the case with Maxwell's portfolio."

One of the quirks of the administration process is that it does not allow administrators to distribute funds. According to Tuch: "We had to ensure that the method of distribution was the most beneficial for creditors. Liquidation appeared expensive and after discussions with the

REALISATIONS	
Source	£ million
MGN share sale	373
Other newspapers	17
AGB	52
British International Helicopters	31
Robert Maxwell's "toys", other assets and investigation recoveries	189
Interest	34
Total to date	716
Distributions to date: £40 million	

Group, Headington Holdings and London & Bishopton Group, have been complicated by the vast flows of funds in and out of Maxwell's "private side". A scheme has been approved to pool the corporate trio's assets for distribution.

As the table shows, overall realisations amount to some £716 million. The Big Man's "toys", including the *Lady Ghislaine* and the Gulfstream GIV, raised some £20 million, while investigation recoveries are understood to have contributed more than £100 million to the £189 million item. The sales of *Ma'ariv* and *The European* accounted for £8.5 million and just over £3 million respectively. Gross private side indebtedness amounts to between £1.75 billion and £2 billion, including inter-company debts. Some £276 million is currently being held by companies under the administration's control.

Fees to date are reputed to amount to less than 4 per cent of the £716 million worth of realisations: significantly more productive than the legal show.

Frederick Cooper warning

Frederick Cooper, the metals engineering group, warned shareholders that operating profits for the six months to January 31 would be "significantly below" those earned in the corresponding period a year ago.

However, in the absence of unforeseen circumstances, total dividends are expected to be slightly in excess of the 25p paid for the year ended July 31, 1995. The shares fell 6p to 48p.

OGC pegs offer

OGC International ruled out an increase in its agreed offer for OIS International Inspection, the oil industry services company, after Abbot Group, the engineering concern, increased the value of its original bid to £9.94 million from £8.25 million and acquired a 20 per cent stake in the company. Abbot's bid is worth 32p a share in cash, with an all-shares alternative, against OGC's offer of 25p.

Bland resigns

Sir Christopher Bland has resigned as non-executive director of Nynex Cablecomms Group, the cable television and telephony company, with effect from January 1 after his appointment as chairman of the board of governors of the BBC.

Fokker is offered short-term lifeline

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Dutch Government is offering a temporary loan of 255 million guilders (£124 million) to administrators of Fokker, the stricken regional aircraft group, to provide a breathing space while buyers are sought for the business.

Government orders for four Fokker planes worth 110 million guilders are being brought forward to help to keep the factory at Amsterdam's Schiphol airport in work. But Hans Wijers, the Dutch Economics Minister, said that there was "no reason whatsoever for great optimism" about a rescue. Although speculators continued to buy Fokker shares, the minister said the company "faces very great problems".

Although the holding company and its commercial aircraft business are in administration, the company's aircraft

servicing and defence arms are trading normally.

One of the three administrators, Rutger Schimmelpenninck, said that he did not rule out finding a solution for the whole of Fokker. "I don't want to express pessimism or optimism — there are still too many open ends," he said. "The situation is worrying. Let's not forget that. But there is hope."

Bombardier, the Canadian group tipped to acquire Fokker's regional jet business, said again that it had "shown no interest". It already owns de Havilland, Canadair and Short Brothers of Belfast.

Short Brothers, which makes wings and other assemblies for Fokker's jets, has already taken preliminary steps to make up to 1,500 workers redundant.

The chances of finding a buyer or partner appear slim, particularly within the four-week reprieve from creditors granted to Fokker by a court in The Netherlands.

Mr Wijers said that the difficulties of finding a rescuer in an industry "with large financial risks, continuing overcapacity and ruthless prices" were not good. "For the time being it is just words and paper," he said. He added that the Government would insist on market rates for its loans.

Trustees for some bonds issued by Fokker have begun moves to require their repayment. Commerzbank, in Germany, which held bonds issued by Fokker's holding, responded to a question about the likely impact on its portfolio by stating that it had accounted for all possible risks in its 1995 accounts. This was interpreted as an indication that it had already written down some of the debt.



Different picture: John Partridge, the chairman of Partridge Fine Arts, reported a fall in profits to £1.9 million from £2.8 million last year. The dividend is cut to 2.9p from 3.3p

News Corp and MCI in US move

By GEORGE SIVELL

MCI, the communications group, is to team up with The News Corporation, parent company of *The Times*, to offer information and entertainment services to businesses and consumers across America via direct broadcast satellite.

The announcement follows MCI's successful \$682 million bid in the Federal Communications Commission auction for the last remaining direct broadcast satellite slot to provide coverage of all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

Bert C. Roberts, chairman and chief executive officer of MCI, said: "This new venture is a perfect marriage of MCI's sales and marketing skills, customer base and billing abilities with News Corp's expertise in entertainment and information programming.

"We are especially excited about our ability to create unique new information products for our customers, a strategy that will clearly put us in front of our competitors."

Rupert Murdoch, chairman and chief executive of News Corp, said: "This new venture demonstrates the strength of our strategic relationship with MCI. Working with MCI, News Corp will leverage its leadership in the worldwide entertainment and information business to bring exciting new video and information services to American consumers."

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

British-Borneo in £54m rights issue

BRITISH-BORNEO Petroleum Syndicate is raising £54.1 million through a two-for-five rights issue at 310p per new ordinary share to finance exploration and development of deep-water oilfields in the Gulf of Mexico. It also announced a pre-tax profit of £13.6 million for last year, up 20 per cent. Oil and gas revenues were also up 20 per cent to £38.4 million. Existing shares rose 32p, to 410p.

Alan Gaynor, chief executive of British-Borneo, which already operates in the North Sea and shallow-water areas of the Gulf of Mexico, said the new development is an "opportunity ... giving us a competitive advantage over our peers for the next 12 to 18 months". Last month, the company entered into an agreement with Shell to develop and exploit the Morpeth oilfield, which has estimated reserves of around 50 million barrels.

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NSM warns of loss

NSM, the mining company, yesterday said that it was likely to incur a loss in the second half of the year after being hit by a number of problems, including an out-of-court settlement, severe weather and lower prices. The company acquired Ryan Mining for £25 million last year but is also looking to make about £15 million from disposals. It said it expected to be profitable for the year, but if a number of disposals were not completed before March there would be a second-half loss.

Grosvenor Inns ahead

GROSVENOR INNS, the bar and pub company, announced a 27 per cent rise in half-year profits to £913,000 before tax. The company, whose pubs include the Slug and Lettuce, Hedgehog and Hoghead and Belchers chains, also said it was buying out the 20 per cent minority stake in Bar Central for up to £1.95 million. The costs will be covered with a share issue. The company, which secured a full Stock Exchange listing last August, increased turnover 24 per cent to £8.7 million. The dividend was raised 10 per cent to 2.75p, payable on March 15.

Porsche accelerates

PORSCHE, the German sports car manufacturer, said its turnaround was continuing, with profits of DM100 million expected for the first half of the 1996 fiscal year. After three years of losses, it reported a profit of DM2.1 million for the year to January 31. Shareholders were told at the annual meeting yesterday that group revenues were up 19 per cent to about DM1.4 billion in the first six months of the fiscal year to January 31, against DM1.19 billion last time. Car sales rose 17 per cent to 9,559 during the same period.

Caird plans refinancing

CAIRD GROUP, the troubled waste management company, announced a major refinancing, including a debt reduction, the restructuring of ordinary and preference shares and an issue of convertible loan stock to raise £5 million. Yorkshire Bank, the group's principal banker, will be repaid £5 million and has agreed to write off a further £7 million of the debt and to extend new facilities of £7.7 million. The issue is underwritten by CRBF, an investment fund owning 11 per cent of Caird.

Company failure at 6-year low

By MARTIN BARROW

THE number of company failures fell last year to its lowest point since 1980. Figures compiled by KPMG

accountants show that there were 1,755 insolvencies, a 14 per cent decrease over 1994's figure of 2,142.

The fall was evenly spread across the UK with nearly all regions witnessing a decline. However, the rate of decline appeared to diminish during 1995. Between the first and second quarters the number fell by nearly 11 per cent, but between the third and fourth

quarters the fall was nearer 3 per cent.

The annual rate in percentage terms is also declining. Between 1992 and 1993 the number fell 34 per cent, and between 1993 and 1994 by 28 per cent. But between 1994 and 1995 it was just 14 per cent.

KPMG said the slower rate

suggested the level of company failures is nearing a point of natural wastage.

Tim Hayward, KPMG's

head of corporate recovery,

said the diminishing numbers could also be attributed to the willingness of banks to assist struggling debtors, and to the much stronger line taken by companies against their debtors.

The civil engineering industry is being hit by a "deepening slump", according to a gloomy new report today. A low level of invitations to tender for new work points to a big fall in workload and jobs over the coming months, it warned, after a survey of 121 contractors.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

The middle-aged man, watched by a small group of dazed colleagues, cut the inscription "A member of Daimler-Benz Aerospace" from the company's blue emblem and left the name Fokker to flutter alone at half-mast ...

Business Focus

— The Sunday Times tomorrow

TOURIST RATES

Bank	Bank
Australia S. 2.13	1.97
Austria 1.82	1.65
Belgium Fr. 1.55	1.45
Canada 3.21	2.92
Cyprus Cyp. 0.92	0.82
Denmark 1.47	1.35
Finland Mkt. 1.47	1.35
France F. 1.12	1.02
Germany D. 1.29	1.18
Greece Dr. 1.29	1.18
Hong Kong 1.3	1.02
Ireland 1.21	1.02
Italy Lira 1.26	1.02
Japan Yen 1.74	1.50
Malta 1.25	1.02
New Zealand 1.21	1.02
Norway 1.25	1.02
Portugal 1.25	1.02
Spain 1.25	1.02
Sweden 1.25	1.02
Switzerland 1.25	1.02
United Kingdom 1.25	1.02
USA \$ 1.25	1.02

Portuguese 1.25, Denmark 1.25, Sweden 1.25, Switzerland 1.25, United Kingdom 1.25, France 1.25, Spain 1.25, Portugal 1.25, Italy 1.25, Germany 1.25, France 1.25, Belgium 1.25, Netherlands 1.25, Sweden 1.25, United Kingdom 1.25, France 1.25, Spain 1.25, Portugal 1.25, Italy 1.25, Germany 1.25, France 1.25, Belgium 1.25, Netherlands 1.25, Sweden 1.25, United Kingdom 1.25, France 1.25, Spain 1.25, Portugal 1.25, Italy 1.25, Germany 1.25, France 1.25, Belgium 1.25, Netherlands 1.25, Sweden 1.25, United Kingdom 1.25, France 1.25, Spain 1.25, Portugal 1.25, Italy 1.25, Germany 1.25, France 1.25, Belgium 1.25, Netherlands 1.25, Sweden 1.25, United

STOCK MARKET



PHILIP PANGALOS

Late recovery sparked by improving US bonds

SHARES ended the week on a mildly positive note after a rebound on Wall Street and a technical recovery by US bonds helped to bolster sentiment in late London trading, offsetting weaker gilts and futures markets.

The FT-SE 100 index, down 19.7 points at one stage, recovered to finish the day up 0.5 at 3,734.7, giving a loss of 13.7 points on the week. Volume reached 740 million shares.

Volume was boosted by 51.7 million shares in **Granada**, 10p stronger at 71.4p. The bulk of this arose after one seller, understood to have been **Granada** itself, sold 25 million shares to **ABN Amro Hoare Govett** and **BZW**, which in turn placed them within range of institutional investors at the 65.5p level.

Forte, up 6p to 402p, is due to be replaced as a constituent of the FT-SE 100 index after the close on Tuesday. It will be replaced by the largest company on the reserve list, which includes **Mercury Asset Management**, up 16p to 899.4p, the fund management group that played a key role in Granada's battle for control of Forte. Others on the reserve list are **Next**, 2p firmer at 456p, **Greencells**, down 2p at 603p, **MEPC**, off 4p at 404p, and **Anglian Water**, 2p lower at 565p.

Food retailers suffered a bout of indigestion after **Sainsbury**, the supermarket group, highlighted the competitive conditions gripping the industry by making what amounted to a profits warning. Sainsbury said in its January trading statement that a buoyant Christmas helped it to lift sales by 5 per cent in the 16 weeks to January 13, but profits were hit by high promotional activity which will depress second-half margins and dent profits. The news saw analysts downgrade their profit forecasts.

Tony McNeary at NatWest Securities has reduced his pre-tax profit forecast for the current year to March from £787 million to £760 million, with next year's estimate trimmed from £827 million to £815 million.

Sainsbury shares tumbled 21.2p to 359p on volume of 17.7 million, while **Asda Group** eased 1.5p to 106.5p as 10.8 million shares were traded. **Argyll**, which owns **Safeway**, fell 1.5p to 33.4p. **Kwik Save** up 39p to 289p. **Kwik Save** downgrades **Farmland Electronics** to 612p from 67p. **Farmland** is the best



Bill Colvin, right, and Alan Gaynor of British Borneo saw shares soar on news of a discounted rights issue

performing FT-SE share, adding 42p, or 2.7 per cent, to 1,500 on volume of 5.79 million shares. Demand was fuelled after positive noises from United Steel in the US, pointing to strong orders and recovery hopes.

P&O, which is rumoured to be a potential break-up candidate, was the second best performer among FT-SE

company, though a healthy 7.2 per cent yield has also attracted investor attention. The bid stories were fuelled after UBS suggested a 700p-a-share break-up value on the company, underpinned by its strong property portfolio, said to be worth about £1.7 billion.

Thorn EMI jumped 34p to 161.7p, with demand for shares boosted by the

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stocks with the shipping

PAIN IN GAIN 37

Delays cause more Tessa troubles

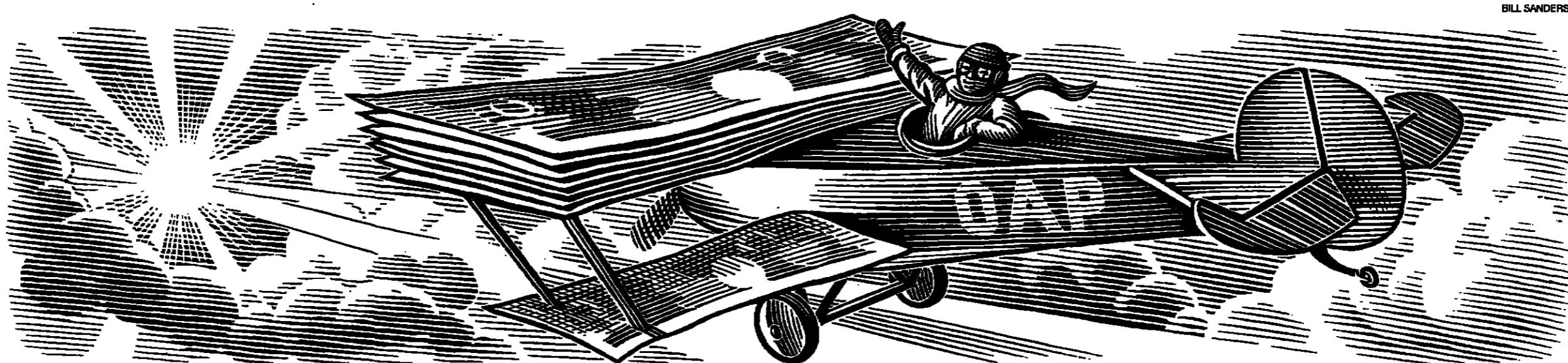
WEEKEND MONEY

A-Z OF FINANCE

Your guide through the money maze

Compulsory contributions to a new scheme may be needed to resolve crisis

BILL SANDERSON



Workers may have to top up pensions

Action is needed soon to erase the threat of old-age poverty. Sara McConnell reports

Working people may be compelled to make contributions to pension schemes to top up basic state retirement provision, if the Government accepts the advice of an independent inquiry into retirement income published this week.

The Retirement Income Enquiry (RIE) claims compulsory contributions to top up pension schemes by the better off are the only way the country can ensure its citizens have enough to live on in retirement. It criticises the existing pensions regime as "unsatisfactory for many people" and gives warning that some of society's more vulnerable people find themselves facing poverty in old age.

Its findings reflect growing Government fears that an ageing population, combined with a shrinking workforce, will put an unbearable strain on the present state pension by the early decades of the next century.

So how might the system work? What will be different? Here are answers to some of the questions you may be asking.

Q I work full-time and pay National Insurance contributions, so am I contributing to my pension?

A In theory, yes. Part of your NI contribution goes into the National Insurance fund, which pays state pensions. There are two sorts of state pension, basic and earnings-related. The maximum basic state pension for a single person this year is £58.85 and for a couple £94.10, but you only get this if you have paid full National Insurance contributions throughout your working life. You are also paying towards the state earn-

ings related pension scheme (Sersps), unless you or your company have opted out.

Q So why am I contributing "in theory"?

A National Insurance fund is run on a pay-as-you-go

than workers can make it up again. By the time today's workers, particularly those in their 30s and 40s, reach pension age, it is unlikely the fund will be able to afford the sum if necessary to what the Government considers an adequate income.

This basic pension will be topped up with compulsory contributions to an occupational scheme, a personal pension or a new national pension scheme, on top of state contributions. Employers and employees would both have to contribute at least a set minimum, as would the self-employed. It is not yet clear who would run a national scheme, but it could be the insurance companies operating under contract from a specially created governing body.

Q But it is insurance companies who sold all those people the wrong pensions!

A Even insurance companies admit they have a credibility problem and the RIE expresses concern about pension mis-selling. More than two years after hundreds of thousands of people were found to have been wrongly advised to transfer from company schemes to personal pensions, only a handful have been compensated.

The reputation of insurance companies generally is likely

Pensioners may soon get the answers they want to hear

basis. This means the contributions you pay in immediately go out to pay pensions to today's retired people, instead of being invested. This is fine when there are substantially more contributors than pensioners, but now there are more older people living longer and draining the fund faster

Q What does the Retirement Income Enquiry suggest as an alternative?

A It wants to keep the basic state pension but abolish Sersps, which would be expected to cost £12 billion a year by 2030. The basic state pension, paid from the National Insurance

wishes of members that might conflict with maximising proceeds. Alternative private funds, except for voluntary employer schemes, should also expect to be more accountable to members.

The first problem would be choosing politically correct equity investments. But that is also most easily solved: by avoiding choice. The national fund would have to mirror the all-share index, not necessarily a bad thing. Draggedon contributors wanting a specific "ethical" or "green" policy could opt for a dedicated private fund.

Passive management might also help in the fraught area of takeover bids. Some index funds do nothing before a bidder wins control. This builds in a bias against hostile takeover bids, but that would doubtless be popular.

Even under such a regime, there is no escaping issues of corporate governance and company conduct: from share options to control of the chief executive, from dividend policy to major deals, from environmental audits to dirty deeds in poor countries. The national fund, or non-employer equivalents, would have to vote if topics come up.

Canny pressure groups will make sure votes are called, lobby funds and badger managers or governing bodies to answer for their actions. That process will wash over into pressure on the block-wielding barons to become more open and accountable too. Private shareholders would gain no power individually, but could wield far more collectively, if pressure groups lobbying the faceless ones reflect their views. If not, they had better start their own.

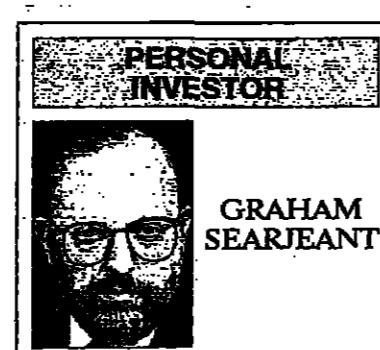
Stakeholders v the barons

Remember last summer's stormy British Gas meeting? Private investors lambasted those new pay packages on which the board wasted so much time. Faceless pension fund managers, insurance companies and trusts backed the board. Perhaps they reflected the true feelings of the silent majority of small investors, as well as beneficiaries of the funds they manage. Perhaps not. There is no way of knowing.

Institutional investors' power to outdo individuals was well illustrated in the bizarre Forte affair. Unless quick money is to be had, however, the City barons who wield such power are not always so keen to exercise it. Contrary to untried guidelines, most did not bother to register a vote when asked by British Aerospace to approve the sale of Rover to Germany's BMW. The minority still outvoted private investors.

This hegemony might soon change. A fully funded compulsory National Pension Scheme to replace Sersps, recommended by Sir John Anson's Retirement Income Inquiry, makes enough sense to see the light of day in the next five years. Unless the vast majority opted for private schemes instead, it would rapidly outgrow any other fund in the country. Quite rightly, the Anson report presumes that "the fund would be invested in a well-balanced portfolio of investments, like any other defined contribution fund". That would make it the biggest owner of domestic shares.

In the long run, that must be good for share prices. It will also change the role of shareholders. Thankfully, few now want Whitehall to use such shares to



control firms, like some new version of the National Enterprise Board. But the fund is bound to be politicised. The Anson report says it should be run not by government but by "a governing body acting in the interest of beneficiaries". That body would be appointed by ministers, however, so its conduct would be open to political debate as independently regulated utilities.

The governors could delegate fund management to the usual City barons, but that would not really make much difference. If people are obliged by law to contribute, they are entitled to know how their money and their votes are used. Fund and holdings would have to be segregated, and votes made public.

Managers would inevitably be held

accountable for more than the overall performance of the funds, via the governing body and ultimately via Parliament. They could not really hide behind the Scargill judgment, which obliges conventional trustees to ignore

to be one of the biggest sticking points if one or more of them secures a contract with the Government to operate the national scheme.

Q Are company schemes any better? What if my employer steals my pension money?

A The Government was forced to act to tighten up occupational pension regulation after hundreds of millions of pounds disappeared from the coffers of Maxwell pensioners.

The Pensions Act 1995 provides for a compensation fund, a pensions regulator and a certain proportion of member trustees to try to prevent abuse. But none of these will stop an employer bent on fraud.

Mis-selling bill could top expected £4 billion

In the latest development in the personal pension controversy, Pearl Assurance this week fought back against claims that its bill for compensating for mis-selling was higher than the industry average.

The company's claim could mean that the £4 billion total previously given as the life insurance industry's total liability for the personal pension scandal could be an underestimate.

Pearl refused to comment on the £240m estimate for its own compensation, and claimed it was too early to tell what the eventual bill would be.

Pearl said that competitors who were claiming to have only a handful of compensation cases had failed fully to realise their problems. The company claimed that its review was at a more advanced stage than those of its competitors. To date, Pearl has calculated that around 120,000 of its 300,000 pensioners may need to be compensated.

Pearl has so far paid compensation of £1m on 200 cases, from a total of 40,000 opt-outs and 86,000 transfers.

The Personal Investment Authority, the regulatory body, said it did not rule out disciplining companies where there was clear evidence of systematic mis-selling.

Pearl attacks rivals' findings

Employees had been urged not to join company schemes. Those who have been misadvised will eventually be compensated for losses.

Last week, a survey of some of the biggest pension providers pinpointed Pearl as having one of the biggest problems with mis-selling. Max Mauchline, Pearl customer benefit review manager, disputed its findings, saying: "Our discussions with others carrying out the review would indicate that we have the same proportion of opt-outs as others, adding that transfers are less consistent."

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Clare Stewart on our national obsession, antiques, from fine art to Dinky Toys

Bulls roam the auction houses

INTEREST in antiques is growing, fuelled perhaps by the Jane Austen costume dramas that fill our TV screens. Last week 15,000 collectors packed the Birmingham National Exhibition Centre for the Art and Antiques Fair, mounted by Lapada, the association of art and antique dealers. Furniture sold strongly, with a pair of 19th-century cabinets making £42,000.

On shows to tempt buyers at the Birmingham fair were £20 million worth of antiques, ranging from £5 to £100,000. The rush at the fair reflects activity nationwide as collector and bargain-hunters search local shops and village hall sales in their quest for something going for a song.

Buying antiques is a national passion that embodies an enormous diversity of taste and budget, whether you are looking for investment, are drawn by the visual appeal of certain items, or just enjoy collecting.

The following television series, such as *Antiques Roadshow*, is indicative of the ever-growing interest. Now in its eighth year, the programme attracts about 12 million viewers every week, and at each location between 200,000 and 500,000 people turn up, clutching their treasures, frequently queuing from dawn in order to be seen by the experts.

This year promises to be busy, for dealers and auction houses, with sales expected to continue their post-recession recovery. The fine art and antiques market was hit hard by the recession, as serious buyers and sellers stayed away, and auctioneers and dealers had to tighten their belts.

International sales at Christie's last year totalled £931 million, up 14 per cent on the previous year. Highlights included top prices being set in categories ranging from Old Masters and Impressionist paintings to teddy bears, as well as ballet slippers belonging to the late Rudolf Nureyev.

Recent prices in the saleroom do not necessarily equate to record investment returns in the future. It is also very difficult to make a comparison with other forms of investment in deciding whether your money is better in antiques or a Clarice Cliff tea

Although it is near impossible to predict how prices will move, Mr Hord believes that pieces with practical use, such as furniture, will continue to fetch good prices. He cites the popularity of 18th-century furniture, with dining sets always in demand. "With things that are purely decorative it is more difficult to guarantee that they will hold their value, given changes in taste," he said.

According to Christie's Art Market Research Index, prices in 18th-century furniture held steady throughout the recession and last year showed a marked increase. By comparison, Index figures for Chinese ceramics show that they have followed the general market trend, peaking in 1990, with less certain recovery subsequently.

Generally, "prices are now firming up compared to the last three years, which have been difficult," according to Mr Hord. "There are indications that we are moving from a bear to a bull market," he says.

For many people the route into collecting is through the more everyday items that do not always require a large cheque book.

One ever-expanding market is what is loosely termed 20th-century collectables, which might be phone cards, Swatch watches or Disney souvenirs. The sale of cinema and pop memorabilia is also setting new records, though more cautious investors might doubt their long-term investment value. Toys from teddy



The Lady Penelope puppet from television's *Thunderbirds* fetched £30,000 for her co-creator last year

bears to train sets continue to be eagerly sought after. The sound of jaws dropping could be heard at Phillips, the London auctioneers, last year as Sylvia Anderson, co-creator with her husband, Gerry, of the *Thunderbirds* puppets, sold her Lady Penelope puppet for £30,000.

Not all toys fetch such prices. "A large part of our business is selling Dinky Toys to collectors," says Hugo Marsh, head of toys at Christie's. "In good condition and with their boxes, these might sell from around £25-£50 or could be worth over £1,000." Last year a pre-war Dinky Toy Bentalls delivery van made £2,000.

Highlights among Christie's toy sales in 1996 include a large collection of very desirable Märklin model trains in May, a big Dinky Toy sale in April, and Hornby (19) coming down the line in October. Among more modern toys, Mr Marsh rates

as highly collectable those linked to film and television productions, from the earliest *Batman* to *Star Wars*. *Early Barbie dolls* are also in demand, fetching up to £1,000 each.

Many people, having exhausted local shops and fairs, are rather timorous about venturing into an auction room. "People get very nervous that they are going to end up with a stuffed elephant for £2,000 if they bid an eyelid," says John Kirkland, associate director of Hamptons, the Surrey auctioneers. "That's absolute rubbish — you need to make a very definite eye contact with the auctioneer before you are included in the bidding."

Furthermore, to avoid any confusion, salerooms issue bidders with an identifying number that can be raised to attract the auctioneer's attention. The buyer's premium will vary, but an average is about 15 per cent.

inclusive of VAT. Payment is usually in cash, direct debit or banker's draft. Unless advised in advance, payment by cheque is not advised, as your stuffed elephant or Chippendale chairs will not be handed over until the cheque has cleared. You might also have to pay storage charges while waiting.

If you are selling, it is advisable to get several valuations. Most auction houses can offer free verbal valuations if they have the necessary specialist in-house. For a fee, they will come to your house.

When buying from dealers, it is important to get a detailed receipt and history. As an added safeguard, dealers belonging to trade associations such as Lapada or the British Antique Dealers Association (Bada) will be bound by a code of practice.

Any complaints about a purchase can be referred to the relevant association.

GUIDELINES

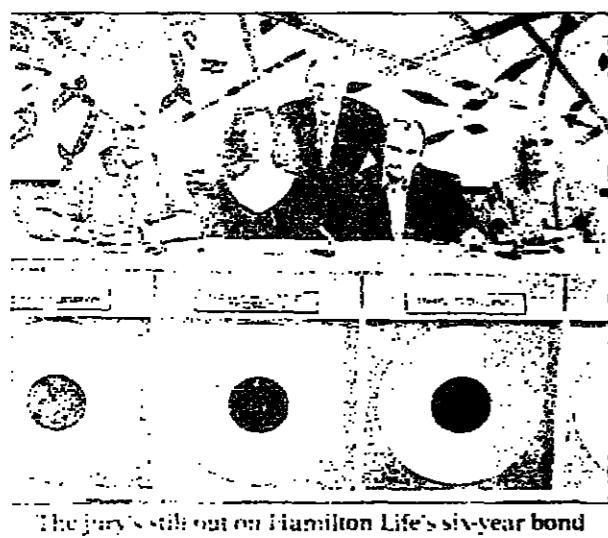
THE ANTIQUE TRADE GAZETTE, published weekly, provides a comprehensive guide to the salerooms, regional fairs and shows, annual subscription £52. 0171 420 3857.

Guides. Regularly updated guides such as *Villiers*, also the *toys* guide, provide details on pricing and identification.

LAPADA 0171 223 2511.

BADA 0171 559 4124.

Sales and valuations details: Christie's 0171 781 7633; Sotheby's 0171 205 9399; Phillips 0171 629 6622; Bonhams 0171 302 3064; Hamptons 01483 423507.



The jury's still out on Hamilton Life's six-year bond

Temptation of a market-linked guaranteed bond

These days, when building society deposit accounts are paying paltry interest, an unknown life assurance company is tempting savers with a more generous-than-usual guaranteed-growth bond. Give £50,000 minimum to Hamilton Life and you are guaranteed 50 per cent capital growth over six years, free of basic rate tax. There are further possible returns if the FTSE 100 index performs well.

If you need guaranteed regular income rather than growth, monthly income can be paid at 6.7 per cent a year

or annual income at 6.7 per cent. If you take the income route, you will simply get back your initial investment at the end of six years, plus any stock market growth.

"This has come at a good time with interest rates dropping and it is giving a substantial return," says Amanda Davidson of Hulme Mechan, the independent financial adviser. "Who is it for? It's for Hamilton Life? A guaranteed return as good as the market, behind it." Hamilton Life is part of the American HFC Bank, the bank that issued the ATM credit card.

among others, and which says it has assets of more than \$35 billion. For the past 12 years, Hamilton Life has concentrated on credit protection insurance.

This is the first bond it has issued. Andrew Ferguson, of Hamilton Life, said: "We are aware that people have not heard of us. But we have distributed the product through independent financial

advisers, so it doesn't matter that our name is unknown. Through this bond we have opened up a new means of distribution for the company, and there will be further issues of the bond and other new products to come." The adviser who sent the mailshot was Johnson Fry, which says it investigated Hamilton Life fully. You don't get a guarantee for nothing.

For a start you may not earn the full value of any market rises. Hamilton Life says it will give 50 per cent of the actual growth in the FTSE 100 index, calculated as a percentage of your earnings. Also bonds do not pay the underlying shares' dividends. The plans are inflexible, so if you need your capital or the market falls and you could be earning more elsewhere, you can only surrender your policy at a harsh penalty. And the return from bonds at the end of their term is paid after deduction of basic-rate income tax, which cannot be reclaimed by non-taxpayers while higher-rate taxpayers face an extra tax charge.

If you want the comfort of a guaranteed return of your

Bonds tax threat.....35

capital, ask an independent adviser for advice. Marks out of ten for the Hamilton Life guaranteed-growth bond? "If it was another well-known company, I would give it a high mark," said Amanda Davidson, "but since I don't know this lot, six out of ten."

SARAH JONES

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Patience is the principal skill required to play the building society flotation lottery which is a game of delayed gratification. Having spotted a society itching to shed its mutual status, you must be prepared to wait for your cash or free shares. This period of anticipation will not necessarily be a relaxing experience.

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COMMENT
ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance
Editor

In a fair-minded decision that shows the society's determination to retain the long-term goodwill of its customers, the Halifax has said that it will reveal this second date some time in advance to allow members to replenish their balances. The Woolwich, however, reserves the right to announce the second qualifying day retrospectively. As several readers have remarked, this word has seldom sounded so menacing.

The Woolwich, once renowned for being equitable, both in name and deed, should be careful about its reputation.

Knowing that their members are held captive, societies can afford to be a lot less competitive about savings rates, as National & Provincial savers can attest. Next week, the Woolwich lowers its rates

by an average of 0.4 per cent. But its savers will not be as offended as those of the Alliance & Leicester whose flotation announcement is imminent.

This week, the society launched a Prime 90 Deposit Account. Those who invest will not be able to share in the society's flotation largesse. But, by way of compensation, they will be earning far more generous rates than the hapless

holders of A&L share accounts who are paying for their flotation expectations in lower returns. For example, the new and shiny Prime 90 Deposit pays 6.60 per cent on amounts between £10,000 and £24,999. This compares with 4.05 per cent on the Bonus 90, a share account. The differences are less marked, but significant for smaller amounts.

Without putting in jeopardy their share entitlement, there

is little that Bonus 90 savers and others who have seen their returns become uncompetitive, can do to complain about such anomalies. Except, perhaps, to regard the whole thing as a nothing more than a game and take their money elsewhere, as soon as they have picked up the flotation prize.

rather different. But then consistency has never been the hallmark of National Savings' policy.

Rates on the whole National Savings range have been cut. Although elderly savers who are currently switching from Income Bonds into Pensioners Bonds will still be able to earn the old rate of 7.5 per cent, others will earn the new rate of 7 per cent. National Savings obviously hopes that the new lower tax will make the return look attractive, despite the cut.

Following the decrease, Pensioner Bonds are still a reasonable investment, but those about to celebrate their 60th birthday will not be much impressed with the Chancellor's rather mean present.

Why so mean?

THE 1995 Budget contained two concessions for savers, a cut to 20 per cent in the tax on savings and a new lower age limit of 60 for National Savings' Pensioners Bond.

At the time, the various National Savings schemes with their competitive returns were being promoted as never before. Three months later, things look

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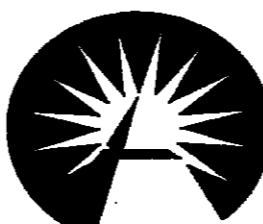
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Britain's biggest building societies could pass on tens of millions of pounds of profits to their members by cutting mortgage rates and boosting savings but are reluctant to do so, it was claimed this week.

Homeowners could enjoy the benefit of a full 1 per cent cut in mortgage rates immediately if societies chose to redistribute their huge cash reserves now.

But despite talk of a "mortgage war" - as leading societies reduce rates to steal each other's custom - many are still sitting on huge profits which are not ploughed back to their members, according to Rob Thomas, housing analyst with UBS.

This week the Britannia and the Birmingham Midshires said savings and mortgage rates were "under review" after the Bradford & Bingley's 0.25 per cent mortgage cut on Wednesday. The Britannia said it was looking at giving "loyalty incentives, bonuses and rewards" to members. The Nationwide has hinted it intends to improve rates for savers and borrowers in April, the end of its financial year.

Mr Thomas says the 20 largest building societies will have made £3.7 billion pre-tax profit in 1995, an increase of 15 per cent on the previous year. They could easily afford to cut rates by 1 per cent, which would cost them two thirds of their profits but would win the goodwill of their customers by putting an extra £40 a month into the pocket of a homeowner with a £50,000 endowment mortgage.

Mr Thomas says: "The societies only need to retain a third of their profits. By giving away two thirds of profits they would lower their price in the market and make it easier for them to stay mutual. But they

forgot about mutuality in the 1980s when they made huge profits which they are now just sitting on."

Brian Davis, chief executive of the Nationwide, said: "We have a similar philosophy to the Bradford & Bingley. The benefit of being a mutual is that we have only customers, and no shareholders, to satisfy. But it is a very tough market, and it is going to get even more competitive."

Homeowners could enjoy an immediate 1 per cent reduction in mortgage rates

The move by Bradford & Bingley, the sixth largest society, is an attempt to show that mutuality - where a society is owned by its members, rather than by shareholders - offers tangible long-term value.

The mortgage rate cut and the freezing of savings rates in a climate of cuts in bank base rates will, according to Dr John Wrigglesworth, Bradford & Bingley's head of strategy.

The Yorkshire, which insists

it is committed to mutuality, has already said it will spend an estimated £20 million of profits in 1996 giving more competitive rates to savers and borrowers. After the housing market crashed in 1989 and demand for mortgage products slumped, building societies resorted to "churning" - stealing each other's custom - in order to sell new mortgages.

The Bradford & Bingley believes its latest move will help to retain customers.

It is committed to mutuality, has already said it will spend an estimated £20 million of profits in 1996 giving more competitive rates to savers and borrowers. After the housing market crashed in 1989 and demand for mortgage products slumped, building societies resorted to "churning" - stealing each other's custom - in order to sell new mortgages.

The Bradford & Bingley believes its latest move will help to retain customers.



The bigger building societies may no longer be deemed Scrooges by their members

Lloyds lures free-spenders with low-rate card

Lloyds, the first of the high street banks to impose a fee for its credit card, is attempting to attract free-spending customers from its rivals by offering a card with no fee, for one year only. Lloyds will offer a temporarily low interest rate. Thereafter, those with lower balances will pay a slightly higher rate of interest.

The move could mean other card companies, attempting to appeal to those who do not clear their balance each

month, may have to cut their fees.

From Monday, Lloyds Bank Mastercard will be available at all high street branches, alongside its Access and Gold cards. Regardless of their balance, Lloyds Bank Mastercard customers will pay 1.25 per cent a month, or 16 per cent APR for the first six months.

Customers who have more than £2,000 on their accounts will continue to pay the same rate thereafter, while those with £1,000-£2,000 will be

charged 1.57 per cent per month or 20.5 per cent APR. Those with less than £1,000 will be charged 1.62 per cent per month or 21.2 per cent APR.

Ian Lindsey, executive banking director at Flemings/Save & Prosper, said: "Their rates are generally in line with everyone else. They're trying to encourage customers with a lot of money to switch to their card, but they might as well switch to one like Flemings, charging 0.9 per cent or Royal Bank of Scotland Mastercard charging 1.14 per cent." He added: "Neither Flemings nor Royal Bank of Scotland Mastercard gives an interest-free period, but that's only of relevance if you're sending your account in full."

Mr Lindsey said the interest rate on Lloyds Bank Mastercard is higher than its Access card for customers borrowing £1,000 or less. Interest rates are the same on both cards for those borrowing between £1,000-£2,000. He added the only benefits are for those borrowing more than £2,000. "Lloyds are being protective. They need to offer this rate in case they lose customers."

On waiving the £10 annual fee, he said: "That might be something Flemings could be forced into doing. On average, people spend £1,500 a year on credit cards. If they each spend an extra £300, Lloyds makes an extra £5 a year."

Sandy Wanstall, credit card manager at Lloyds said: "Customers also have the opportunity never to pay a fee if they spend £1,500 a year or £150 a month - which is only three trips to their local supermarket. They can try it out for six months free to see if it fits their lifestyle and spending pattern."

Every time customers use their Lloyds Bank Mastercard they will be automatically entered into a monthly prize draw. The more transactions they make, the greater their chance of winning. Among the prizes are £1,000 Boots gift vouchers, five £1,000 Thomas Cook holiday vouchers and a Rover 214Si car. Customers will also be entered into a £500 daily draw on completing their application forms.

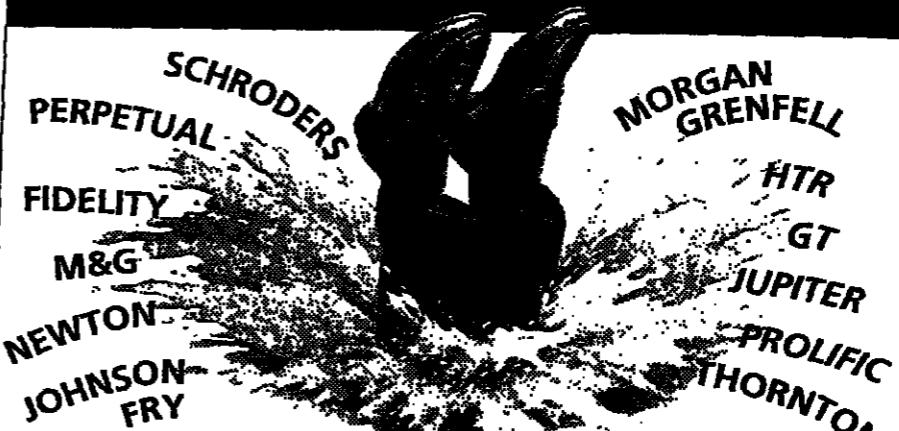
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MASTERCARD UK CREDIT CARD INTEREST RATES

	pm %	APR purchases	APR cash	Cost of borrowing £1,000 ps
Flemings/Save & Prosper* (£12 annual fee)	1.00	14.6	16.1	£138.80
Flemings/Save & Prosper* "Base Rate option"	0.94	11.8	14.6	£140.40
Bank of Scotland (£12 annual fee)	1.57	21.7	23.8	£215.55
Midland Mastercard (£10 annual fee)	1.63	22.6	24.5	£224.12
Cheshire Access (£10 annual fee)	1.60	22.5	23.5	£220.75
The Express Card (£12 annual fee)	1.00	14.6	16.1	£138.80
General Motors (HFC Bank)	1.60	20.9	20.9	£209.83
Lloyds Access (£12 annual fee)*	1.57	22.0	23.9	£217.55
Lloyds Mastercard (£10 annual fee)* Under £1,000	1.62	21.2	22.4	£222.69
£1,000*	1.57	20.5	21.1	£215.55
£2,000*	1.26	18.0	18.25	£160.00
Midland Access (£12 annual fee)	1.59	22.3	24.2	£220.40
Westpac Access (£12 annual fee)	1.67	23.4	25.3	£231.87
Royal Bank of Scotland Access (£10 annual fee)	1.67	23.2	23.2	£223.87
Royal Bank of Scotland Mastercard* The Sun Card (£12 annual fee)*	1.14	14.5	14.5	£145.71
TSB Mastercard Under £1,000	1.53	21.9	21.9	£211.80
£1,000*	1.67	21.9	22.6	£219.87
£3,000*	1.60	20.9	21.6	£209.83
	1.38	17.9	18.7	£178.70

*No interest free period; *Additional fee of £9 for second card issued; *Annual fee waived for the first year and thereafter if more than £1,000 per annum; *Annual fee waived for the first year and thereafter if more than £1,000 per annum

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Tax threat takes shine off guaranteed-income bonds

A Budget tax cut, reducing the rate of income tax on building society and bank deposits from 25 per cent to 20 per cent threatens the future of guaranteed-income bonds, one of the most popular investments of the Nineties. Around £340 million was invested in these bonds last year alone.

The change to the taxation regime from April will make many of the guaranteed-income bonds on the market less attractive than the equivalent National Savings scheme.

Guaranteed income bonds pay a fixed level of income for a fixed term, guaranteeing to pay back the capital at the end of the term. Basic-rate taxpayers do not have to pay tax on the income from the bond, because the insurance fund has already paid tax. Higher-rate tax payers only pay tax at the marginal rate — 15 per cent.

Many bonds offer a growth option, which means the income can be reinvested. Rates of return on some of the guaranteed income bonds range from 4.7 to 6.7 per cent depending on the length of time you wish to keep your money tied up for.

The higher the rate, the longer you are locked in. National Savings has a number of comparable products. But unlike guaranteed income bonds, these will be taxed from April at the new 20 per cent savings rate. For example, the five-year Capital Bonds offered a fixed interest rate of 7.75 per cent, if the bond is held to maturity. After the deduction of tax at 20 per cent, this will be worth 6.2 per cent. This week this bond was replaced by a new capital bond which only pays a fixed

Caroline Merrell says that National Savings bonds will return to favour

interest of 6.65 per cent, making it more important for investors to hold on to their 7.75 per cent bonds until the end of the term. If you want to cash in your certificates before the end, you will receive a lower rate.

National Savings also offers a Pensioners Bond which, after another Budget change, can be bought by anyone over 60. This used to pay 7.5 per cent (6 per cent net of the new tax rate), but after this week's change will only pay 7 per cent (5.6 per cent net).

Charles Lewatt-Scrivener, director of Towry Law, the independent financial adviser, said: "We compared the rates on GIBs with National Savings investments and found the gap between the two has narrowed as a result of the introduction of the savings tax. Net returns on National Savings have been boosted as a result of the Budget, while rates on GIBs have not changed."

He added that the Government was making it more difficult for companies to offer guaranteed-income bonds with high rates of income. "Now only those companies who have more expenses than

income are able to offer competitive rates," he said.

This peculiarity of life office taxation means only some of the smaller companies such as Hamilton Life (a subsidiary of US company HFC), Pinnacle Insurance, Consolidated Financial and Premium Life can offer competitive products — a fact which marginally raises the rates. Mr Lewatt-Scrivener added that the Government was reviewing the tax treatment of life assurance policies, and it was clear it did not like way companies exploited their expenses to be able to offer guaranteed bonds. He believes it plans to outlaw them except those already in existence.

One other way of achieving high levels of guaranteed income is through investing in Government securities. Five-year gilts are now yielding 6.4 per cent. But income from gilts is taxable, which can make the eventual returns lower than other forms of fixed-interest security. Falls in interest rates over the past few years means many gilts are trading at a far higher price than their issue price, which in turn means that if they are held to maturity, taxpayers could end up losing a lot of their returns in tax.

Guaranteed investments are popular forms of saving. Sun Alliance this week launched a corporate bond Pep that guarantees the capital if it is held for more than six years. The Pep is currently yielding 6.95 per cent income.

For a guide to insurance bonds: Towry Law, Baylis House, Stoke Poges Lane, Slough, Berks SL1 3PS (01753 55400).

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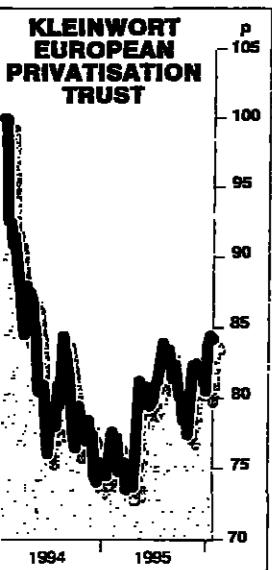
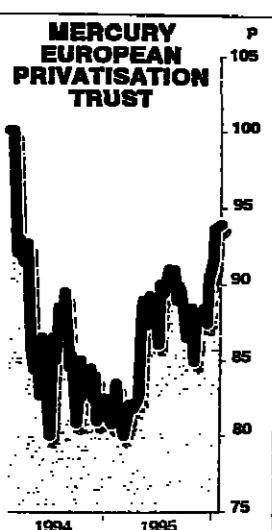
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Roll up for the big buyback as Euro shares hit buffers

Kleinwort Benson is considering buying back shares in its European Privatisation Investment Trust in a move to placate angry investors who have seen the value of their shares fall to an 11 per cent discount since the fund was launched.

Simon White, a director of Kleinwort Benson Investment Management, said: "We believe that the solution to the problem of the discount is to try and increase demand for the shares." The company was trying to do this, he added, through a series of roadshows for intermediaries, while watching the effectiveness of a rival share buyback scheme in narrowing the discount.

Just before Christmas, Mercury Asset Management announced that it intended to buy back shares in its European Privatisation Trust to reduce a discount that was then running at 19 per cent. A discount means that the shares in a trust are trading at less than their net asset value.

Even if the managers of the trust invest wisely and the net asset value increases, shareholders who want to sell will



be unable to reap the rewards of good fund management because they will not be able to get what the shares are worth. Discounts are generated when there are more sellers of shares than buyers.

Mercury this week finalised the details of its share buyback scheme, which involves the trust issuing preference shares to raise money to buy back shares. The shares are then cancelled out, which results in a narrowing of the discount and an increase in net asset value.

Lough Callahan, Mercury's fund manager, blamed the creation of a big discount in the fund on a change of market sentiment at the beginning of 1994, when the trust was unveiled.

Mercury's fund attracted about £500 million from 70,000 investors, who were sold on the idea of buying

shares in newly privatised companies in Europe.

They were aiming to achieve some of the gains experienced by those investing in privatised companies in the UK, but their hopes have so far failed to materialise. The situation was not helped by economic woes and private-sector strikes in France.

Mr Callahan said: "The US

increased interest rates at the beginning of 1994, which had an effect on confidence."

Many people sold their shares immediately after launch, which generated the discount. Kleinwort Benson attracted a similar amount of money from around 72,000 investors. The share price of the KB trust is now 89p, compared with the 100p at launch, while the share price of the Mercury is now 98p, compared with the 100p at launch.

The net asset value of the Kleinwort trust has increased to 103.5p since launch, while the net asset value of the Mercury trust has increased to 113p. Even though Mercury's share buyback has not yet



Striking private-sector workers in France have contributed to a lack of faith in European privatisation stocks

started, the discount has narrowed dramatically, from 19 to 15 per cent, since the programme was announced. Mr Callahan believes that it will take between 12 and 16 months before it is cleared.

As well as hoping to give more value to shareholders

through the buyback, the investment house is hoping to increase interest in the shares through a series of roadshows and by an offer on its savings plan.

Mr Callahan believes that this year should be a good one for European shares. Last year

proved to be a difficult one for European fund managers looking for value in privatisation stocks.

Many of the newest privatisations were in countries suffering the effects of currency weakness, affecting in turn the net asset value of

the fund. Mr Callahan said

that some of the shares in newly privatised European companies had fallen immediately after privatisation — an event which is almost unheard of in the UK.

CAROLINE MERRELL

Treasury to cut back on Ernie's nice little earners

THE £1 million Premium Bond jackpot this week survived a round of Treasury cost cutting—but at the expense of the growing number of small payouts of £50 and £100.

From May 1, National Savings will reduce the number of smaller prizes, increase the number of larger prizes and limit the overall number of prizes to 350,000 a month. The interest rate on Premium Bond investments, used to fund prize money, will be cut from 5.2 per cent to 4.75 per cent, effectively cutting the amount of money available to pay out as prizes.

There will be no cap on the amount of money going into the fund, but National Savings will no longer allocate a prize for every £15,000 invested, so the odds on winning a prize will not be fixed. Based on last month's sales figures, the odds will lengthen from 15,000:1 to 17,200:1.

National Savings argues that it has been a victim of its own success since the £1 million jackpot was introduced in April 1994. Sales of Premium Bonds have soared from £619 million in 1993 to £1.8 billion in 1995.

There was no set number of smaller prizes, which grew as Premium Bond investments grew, pushing up costs. Research from customers also

showed they wanted more medium and larger prizes. National Savings has divided the Premium Bond fund into bands. Of the fund, 10 per cent will be paid out in prizes of £5,000 to £1 million, compared with 6.6 per cent last month. A further 15 per cent will be paid out in prizes of between £500 and £1,000 (2.7 per cent). The remainder will be used for prizes of £50 and £100 (80 per cent).

Other National Savings accounts have also felt the Treasury axe. From yesterday, fixed-rate accounts were replaced with new issues at lower rates, while rates on variable rate accounts fell.

Rates across the board have fallen between 0.25 per cent, and 1.1 per cent on Children's Bonus Bonds and Capital bonds, the hardest hit. Pensioners over 60 whose applications for Guaranteed Income bonds were received by Thursday this week will still qualify for the higher rate of 7.5 per cent gross. Others will get 7 per cent.

We apologise to readers of the A to Z of Personal Finance, which went to press just before the National Savings cuts were announced.

The figures quoted on page 111 contain the old rates.

SARA McCONNELL

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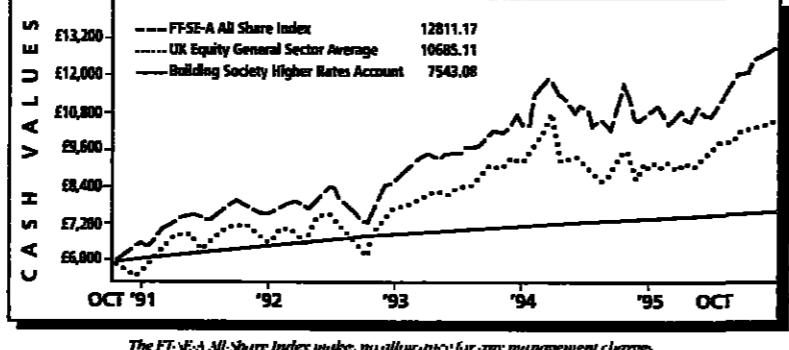
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Caroline Merrell on the trail of more Tessa troubles

Tessa shortfall upsets Halifax savers

How we reported the controversy surrounding poor returns on Tessa with the Halifax Building Society

Certificate delay causes savers pain

£21 billion worth of tax exempt special savings accounts reach the end of their five-year term, the rates on new accounts are not the only thing occupying the minds of Tessa holders.

After controversy over the differing payouts given to Halifax Tessa holders who opened their accounts in January 1991, it is now becoming clear that the maturity certificates, which savers need from their bank or building society if they want to reinvest their funds elsewhere, are being delayed.

Some savers believe that, in a fiercely competitive market, banks and building societies are holding up the certificates, in an attempt to dissuade customers from taking their cash elsewhere.

These delays could mean that savers miss out on some of the better deals available in the market.

Some of the fixed-rate accounts are limited to the number of savers they can accept. For example, after the cut in base rates, some institutions are now lowering the rates on their fixed-rate

Tessas. The West Bromwich Building Society this week reduced the rate of its fixed-rate Follow-up Tessa from 7.55 per cent to 7.35 per cent.

For Elsie Webb, a pensioner from Reading, the dilatory behaviour of Barclays in delivering her maturity certificate was the final straw in a worsening relationship with the bank.

Mrs Webb said: "My Barclays Tessa matured on January 10. I returned an instruction form requesting the money should be paid into a new Abbey National Tessa, and the details and certificate be sent to my home address.

"I got in touch with Barclays again on January 19, and received a statement by second class post on January 20, but not a certificate of maturity."

She finally received her maturity certificate on January 22, 12 days after her Tessa matured.

She said: "I got so mad with Barclays, I shall just be keeping a small current account with them from now on."

Barclays, at first, insisted it sent out all maturity certifi-



Waiting game: Elsie Webb lost patience with Barclays

cates by first class post immediately, but then admitted they had made an administrative error.

A spokeswoman said: "We wrote to all our customers back in October asking what they intended to do when their Tessas matured. We were overwhelmed by the response and there were further delays over Christmas."

The Halifax also suffered a glitch with some of its maturity certificates earlier this month, when computer problems caused delays.

The Halifax claimed that the problem was sorted out quickly and that it had complied with the Inland Revenue rules, which state that maturity certificates have to be sent out within 30 days.

Second wave is linked to market growth

The second wave of tax exempt special savings accounts also includes a group of accounts that paradoxically give savers some exposure to the stock market. Companies offering these accounts include HSBC, the fund manager, the Birmingham Midshires Building Society and Lloyds Bank. The accounts pay a minimum interest rate, or a return linked to the rise in the UK stock market over a five-year period, whichever is the greater.

Equity-linked Tessas are aimed at investors prepared to take a little more risk with their money over the next five years. If interest rates remain at their current low levels, the maximum return

that could be achieved on these accounts is *higher than the maximum which could be achieved from a more conventional account*. But if inflation and interest rates rise, the situation may be reversed.

HSBC's Tessa, which has a £3,000 minimum, will give a guaranteed 5 per cent interest rate. Investors will also get a 1 per cent maturity bonus for each 1 per cent the FTSE 100 rises above 25 per cent over the five years. The bonuses stop if the index rises by more than 30 per cent, which makes the maximum amount of interest 9.16 per cent with a minimum of 5 per cent. Alan Gadd, HSBC managing director, said 1.6 million people had registered an interest. "Many building

societies were assuming their savers would just reinvest," he said.

The Birmingham Midshires is offering two Tessas, one with a minimum 5.5 per cent interest rate, the other with 4 per cent. It will also give savers an extra bonus equal to the rise in FTSE over the five years, if it is greater than the minimum interest. The Bristol & West offers savers the greater of an annual interest rate of 4 per cent plus 1 per cent of the first year's investment, or the rise in the index, while Lloyds offers a minimum interest of 5 per cent, or the percentage rise in the index which ever is greater.

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A minimum advance of £15,000 is required. Typical example of costs repayable for a 4.69% (5.00%) APR mortgage fixed until 28th February 1996. Married couple, aged 32 and 38 years, both non-smokers, applying for an endowment mortgage of £27,375 towards the purchase of a property priced £36,000 over 25 years, 100 monthly mortgage payments, £190.94 net of basic rate tax. Monthly endowment premium of £42.52. Total annual premium £6,945.54 (total amount payable less MIRAS deduction is £6,075.31). The APR shown is typical and is based on a fixed rate of 4.69% for the first 28 months followed by a variable rate for the remainder of the mortgage. Interest rates at the end of the relevant interest period, the Society's standard endowment rate will apply. The rate will apply to end-of-month deposits. A 1% fee will be charged for early repayment. A minimum endowment premium of £15,000 is required. Premiums will be deducted from the endowment. The typical example is calculated using costs incurred in England. Costs may vary in Scotland. An life policy of £32,000 is taken out for £1.95, annual premiums £155.72, ending fee £5.20 and £300 premium for renewals. Plus premiums totalling £1,552 for future insurance premiums less. This typical example is calculated using costs incurred in England. Costs may vary in Scotland. An life policy of £32,000 is taken out for £1.95, annual premiums £155.72, ending fee £5.20 and £300 premium for renewals. Plus premiums totalling £1,552 for future insurance premiums less. This typical example is calculated using costs incurred in England. Costs may vary in Scotland. An life policy of £32,000 is taken out for £1.95, annual premiums £155.72, ending fee £5.20 and £300 premium for renewals. Plus premiums totalling £1,552 for future insurance premiums less. This typical example is calculated using costs incurred in England. Costs may vary in Scotland. 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THE TIMES MONEY INFORMATION SERVICE

Payment due for power shares

THE second instalment deadline on the partly paid National Power and Powergen shares is 3pm on Tuesday, February 6. This means that all cheques must be received by the registrars by Thursday, February 1. One and a half million payment notices have been posted in respect of all current holdings, representing an instalment value of £1.1 billion. Shareholders who took up the Government's offer to buy in March 1995 must respond to these payment notices to retain the right to their shares as well as any future dividends on them. The National Power helpline is 01903 503 733, and PowerGen's is 0117 975 1592.

■ NatWest has announced reduced dealing rates on its BrokerLine telephone share dealing service. For a deal above £4,000, the new commission rate is 0.1 per cent, compared with a previous charge of 0.4 per cent. Key features of BrokerLine include settlement by direct debit and real-time dealing. For further information, call BrokerLine on 0171 895 5018.

■ The Association of Solicitor Investment Managers (Asim), a group of solicitors

LIZZIE ROSE

specialising in portfolio management, has published its directory of members for 1996. Each of Asim's 37 full members are profiled, complete with a check list of services offered and the level of funds under management. The directory also carries a section explaining how Crest, the new Stock Exchange settlement scheme, will affect private investors from July. For a free copy, call Asim on 01922 870065 or write to Asim, Chiddington, Causway, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 8XJ.

■ The Bank of England has produced a paper setting out plans for an official facility for stripping gilt-edged securities into separate interest and capital elements, which could then be held independently and traded. This has been made possible by the reforms on the taxation of gilts and bonds announced by the Chancellor in July 1995 and implemented in the current Finance Bill. Copies of the paper are available from, and practitioner responses should be sent to, The Head of Gilt-Edged and Money Markets Div, Bank of England, Threadneedle St, London EC2R 8AH.

■ The Association of Solicitor Investment Managers (Asim), a group of solicitors

LIZZIE ROSE

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

ANNUAL INCOME

Rates as at January 25, 1996

Investment (£)	Company	Standard Rate (%)
1 Year		
5,000	AIG Life	4.65
10,000	AIG Life	4.75
20,000	AIG Life	4.85
50,000	AIG Life	5.00
2 Years		
5,000	AIG Life	4.93
10,000	AIG Life	5.03
20,000	AIG Life	5.18
50,000	AIG Life	5.33
3 Years		
5,000	AIG Life	5.02
20,000	AIG Life	5.22
50,000	AIG Life	5.33
100,000	AIG Life	5.42
4 Years		
1,000	Premium Life	5.20
20,000	Facial Assurance	5.30
50,000	Facial Assurance	5.40
5 Years		
1,000	Premium Life	5.50
3,000	Pinnacle Insur	6.20

Source: Chamberlain de Broé 0171-634 4222. Net rates. Income and capital guaranteed. Early surrender. Terms vary. Monthly income may be available.



THE

times

THE TIMES WEEKEND MONEY LETTERS

Waiting for account to be settled is Mid Southern water torture

From L. R. Hobbs.

Sir, Have any of your readers come across the extraordinary policies employed by Mid Southern Water in settling accounts?

Recently, I sold my property in Bracknell and wrote to the company on November 7, 1995 to ask them to provide a final account. I had telephoned earlier that day, but was told a written letter was required (all other facilities seemed happy with the telephone — electricity, council tax etc). The company sent me a final account on November 16, indicating that they owed me a small amount. Cheques arrived from elsewhere, but there was nothing from Mid Southern Water.

Eventually, on December 18, I telephoned to inquire about the moneys due to me. It transpired that I was required to write another letter to request release of the moneys. Nowhere did the final account indicate the need to thus write. Does the company assume people will guess what is required, or are they hoping people will forget about it? However, I wrote again on December 18, a letter received

by the company on December 22. Still no moneys by January 4, so I telephoned again, twice.

All local and central office customer service managers were unavailable, but I was able to speak to the head of finance. He told me the policy of requiring customers to write again for their money was company policy following their auditors' request, but that he would ensure my problems were dealt with ASAP. I am still waiting.

I have learnt two things about Mid Southern Water which may be of service to other customers. First, that rendered accounts are not an occasion for payment — so, if the process works both ways, customers may presumably ignore the accounts they receive until the company writes a letter requesting release of the moneys due. Second, it is better to be in debt to, rather than in credit with, Mid Southern Water — you will wait forever for refunds.

Yours faithfully,
LESLIE R. HOBBS,
Nether End Cottage,
Blacksmiths Lane,
Lound, Suffolk.

Not all loyal building society members are rewarded

From Dr M. Crawford

Sir, The current practice among building societies seeking to lose their mutual status seems to be to regard as significant those share account holding members who have £100 or more in the relevant account on a specified date. The date is selected in such a way as to make it impossible for speculators to qualify. The latest example is the Woolwich, which has selected December 31 as its qualifying date.

This practice can lead to what in my view is a serious

inequality, as my wife's experience with the National & Provincial illustrates.

She has for several years had an account with an average balance well in excess of £500. She would be regarded as a two-year account holder under the proposed terms of merger with Abbey National, apart from the fact that, two days before what turned out to be the qualifying date for that merger, she withdrew sufficient money to take the account below £100. As a result, she has no more standing with the society than someone who

Post waste for seller

From Mr L. Oakley

Sir, Recently, with the market

at its peak, I decided to sell

some of the units I held in a

well-known fund.

On Monday morning, I posted my instructions in the first class envelope provided. I received confirmation the next Saturday, showing the dealing date as Friday. By then, the market had suffered a significant correction. I have suggested to the managers that they appear to go slow on instructions to sell on a falling market.

I will, in future, conduct dealings by phone.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL CRAWFORD,
Honfleur,
50 Falcon Road,
Bingley,
West Yorkshire.

Bank's change of heart follows complaint

From C. Barry

Sir, On September 9, last year, you printed an article on my complaint against Lloyds Bank which had dramatically increased the fees on its do-it-yourself PEP, changing its charging basis from a flat fee of £20 to a 1% per cent of the total PEP value.

I am pleased to report that I have now been advised by the bank that it has revised its new charging structure to 1%

per cent — minimum £20, maximum £50 per annum — regardless of the value of the PEP.

The article undoubtedly encouraged a major bank to do a U-turn on its charges. I think that this change of heart should be brought to the attention of your readers.

Yours truly,
C. BARRY,
87 Highwood Gardens,
Clayhall,
Ilford, Essex.

WOOLWICH

Looks like the qualifying date was two years before I was born.

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ADDRESS:

Tel: (Office):

Tel: (Home):

Date of Birth:

Postcode:

Losses wiped out at close

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1995 High Low Close	Price 99 +/- % PE	1995 High Low Close	Price 99 +/- % PE
BANKS			
1271 Nat West	297.0	297.0	297.0
1272 HSBC	297.0	297.0	297.0
1273 Lloyds	297.0	297.0	297.0
1274 Barclays	297.0	297.0	297.0
1275 Standard Chartered	297.0	297.0	297.0
1276 Royal Bank of Scotland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1277 Clydesdale	297.0	297.0	297.0
1278 Midland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1279 Nat West	297.0	297.0	297.0
1280 Royal Bank of Scotland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1281 Lloyds	297.0	297.0	297.0
1282 Standard Chartered	297.0	297.0	297.0
1283 Royal Bank of Scotland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1284 Clydesdale	297.0	297.0	297.0
1285 Midland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1286 Nat West	297.0	297.0	297.0
1287 Royal Bank of Scotland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1288 Lloyds	297.0	297.0	297.0
1289 Standard Chartered	297.0	297.0	297.0
1290 Royal Bank of Scotland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1291 Clydesdale	297.0	297.0	297.0
1292 Midland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1293 Nat West	297.0	297.0	297.0
1294 Royal Bank of Scotland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1295 Lloyds	297.0	297.0	297.0
1296 Standard Chartered	297.0	297.0	297.0
1297 Royal Bank of Scotland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1298 Clydesdale	297.0	297.0	297.0
1299 Midland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1300 Nat West	297.0	297.0	297.0
1301 Royal Bank of Scotland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1302 Lloyds	297.0	297.0	297.0
1303 Standard Chartered	297.0	297.0	297.0
1304 Royal Bank of Scotland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1305 Clydesdale	297.0	297.0	297.0
1306 Midland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1307 Nat West	297.0	297.0	297.0
1308 Royal Bank of Scotland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1309 Lloyds	297.0	297.0	297.0
1310 Standard Chartered	297.0	297.0	297.0
1311 Royal Bank of Scotland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1312 Clydesdale	297.0	297.0	297.0
1313 Midland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1314 Nat West	297.0	297.0	297.0
1315 Royal Bank of Scotland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1316 Lloyds	297.0	297.0	297.0
1317 Standard Chartered	297.0	297.0	297.0
1318 Royal Bank of Scotland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1319 Clydesdale	297.0	297.0	297.0
1320 Midland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1321 Nat West	297.0	297.0	297.0
1322 Royal Bank of Scotland	297.0	297.0	297.0
1323 Lloyds	297.0	297.0	297.0
1324 Standard Chartered	297.0	297.0	297.0
1325 Royal Bank of Scotland	297.0	297.0	297.0
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South African leads after two rounds

Strokes of genius elevate Els to new levels of excellence

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT, IN SINGAPORE

THEY were strokes well worth travelling around the world to see. No matter how many more tournaments Ernie Els enters this year or how many miles he ricks up as he criss-crosses the globe, he will not hit two better iron shots than those at the end of his second round in the Johnnie Walker Classic here. It was a pleasure to see them. Both strokes flew unerringly at their targets. While the first feathered down a foot or so from the flagstick, landing as gently as a butterfly on a leaf, the second was driven hard and low by one of the strongest men in the game. It bounced on the front of the green and rolled 60 feet to stop beside the hole.

The birdie and eagle helped Els to move from seven to ten under par, ensured that he finished his second round in as many days without a bogey and gave him a one-stroke lead over Olli Karlsson, of Sweden, at the Tanah Merah Country Club.

After following Els and Greg Norman almost all the way round, the spectators

might have felt the most important occurrence had been on the 7th, their sixteenth, where Leisl, Els's girlfriend, and Laura, Norman's wife, excitedly beckoned their men towards a grove of trees and pointed at what they could see high in the branches.

"I thought it was going to be a lot of monkeys," Norman said. "It was a bird," Els said. "Don't ask me what sort. It was coloured and had a big

beak." The hornbill sat on its branch as still as a statue. Its plumage was colourful, its beak as big as a man's hand. With its back turned on the bird-watchers, it was showing a lofty disdain for those gathered 30 feet beneath.

"Thanks for showing so much interest in our golf," Norman, striding away from this ornithological interruption towards his ball, said.

Whether he was talking to the bird or his wife is not known. At the 104-yard 8th, their

seventeenth, Els had the honour. He selected his six-iron and judged to perfection the ball's passage over a lake so that it dropped gently two feet below the hole. A birdie was a formality. On the last hole, Els's drive bisected the fairway and left him 222 yards from the front of the green.

Octopus, or "pulpa", was the name that stuck to Asprilla from his days as an eight-year-old street player in Tuluá, in the west of Colombia, and street wiles, street improvisation, street impulsiveness appear to have governed the career of this immensely fast, often irrational and sometimes inspirational goalscorer through to his past three seasons with Parma in Italy.

He could, provided that he strikes instant form, bring the championship to the North East for the first time in 67 years, but if his wayward moods get the better of things, he could also contaminate the dream that Keegan is paid so handsomely to deliver.

Keegan will know the risk. In 1972, he was at Liverpool when that club was one of three that overtook the championship favourites and league leaders, Manchester City, when City had been in a similar position to Newcastle today.

Malcolm Allison, having recently nudged Joe Mercer "upstairs" as the City general manager, gambled by signing

Rob Hughes fears that the signing of Asprilla could wreck Newcastle United's title dream

Kevin Keegan has an octopus by the tentacles. Faustino Asprilla, the exotic Colombian, apparently passed a medical yesterday and, provided that the Home Office grants a work permit, Newcastle United's £7.5 million purchase should be concluded within the next fortnight.

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Rodney Marsh from Queens Park Rangers. Marsh, the maverick, was put straight into the team, City lost impetus, shape and games, and Derby County, the eventual champions, Leeds United and Liverpool all took advantage of their disarray.

Joe Mercer was heard to utter that Allison had "paid £200,000 to lose the championship". Allison admitted that his own impulsive nature had wanted something extra, something to spice effectiveness with entertainment, though he never agreed with one of his successors as manager, Tony Book, the right back in his 1972 side, who three years later wrote in the programme: "We tried every-

thing in our power to make Rodney a successful part of this club. But now he has to go, we cannot permit the problem to fester."

Francis Lee and Mike Summerbee, senior players at the time, had implored Allison to leave the chemistry of the team as it was. I hope, because Keegan's Newcastle set a trend that could ignite more attractive football for years to come, that history is not about to repeat itself. But the risk is there, particularly with Asprilla. He can exasperate you by ignoring instructions, but he can win a game for you

on his own. I wish I could control him."

The manager controlling the players he buys: Keegan is right to believe that he needs

two players to complete his championship push — a midfield ball-winner, and a forward to take some of the load off Les Ferdinand. Rumour has it that another £3.5 million of Newcastle's fortune is earmarked for David Batty. One only hopes that his destructiveness on the field has not carried over to effect off it. For it is strange that a player so well looked after through a whole year of injury with Blackburn Rovers should now, apparently, go AWOL.

Keegan, should he land Batty, would attempt, one feels sure, to curb the spite in his game, for that has been no part of his work at Newcastle.

Buying players for huge sums of money — the £5.5 million in total for the 1971-72 season — has never daunted him. At the start of this season he bought Ferdinand and David Ginola, and the task was to empty

something of himself, his irrepressible spirit, into per-

formers not known for consistency. He has done that.

Asprilla represents a man-

agement challenge quite

different. He has the will and

ability to win medals, but this

Cup glory remains on offer in new format

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

FOR official purposes, rugby league's new spring-summer season begins this weekend in the depths of winter, with snow, frozen pitches and a familiar risk of postponements in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup. Shirt sleeves and balmy nights in the brush new world of Super League are for later. Now the game must wrap itself in thermals for a cherished competition, which, it seems, is to be kept in its present form.

Several sides were accused of not trying in the misguided last winter championship, but there will be no need to call for maximum effort in these fourth-round ties.

Having won the competition for the past eight years, it is not unreasonable to assume that Wigan are working on the basis of playing a 13-month season by the time the inaugural Super League programme is completed. They have a straightforward launch of their defence against Bramley tomorrow. Shaun Edwards, having overturned a suspension yesterday, will extend his run of appearances in each of Wigan's 42 undefeated ties.

For St Helens and Warrington, new coaching appointments bring added pressures. But, while London Broncos lost Gary Grieves' guidance this week, they have the easiest task of the clubs in a state of upheaval at Dewsbury.

The tie at Castleford is a fiery baptism for Shaun McRae, the Australian now in charge at St Helens, while Alex Murphy, in command of Warrington for the game at Oldham said: "We'll see who's worth their jersey, but there are places I would prefer to go than Watershedding."

Thatto Heath, the amateurs from St Helens, had a commendable win at Chorley in the previous round, but are certain to find Rochdale more streetwise.

Wigan and Bath will dis-

cuss television, marketing and sponsorship details for next week their two meetings, under league and union rules. In May.

Keegan risks all on a turbulent talent



time the challenge is to tame, or channel, the wilder aspects of his personality.

Asprilla has a speed, a strike, a startling instinct in his sinewy body, to outwit any defence. If he scores 15 goals, even ten, and Ferdinand remains prolific, nobody would catch Newcastle. But, when the club completed its medical examination, it could not run a stethoscope over the unfathomable elements of his brain, his impulse to erupt.

There have been excuses for everything. For the alleged affair with Petra Sharbach, the porn actress in Italy, he said: "She was looking for publicity, I fell into her trap." For the incident during a holiday in Colombia, when he returned with 35 stitches in a leg wound, he denied that he had kicked in a bus windscreen during an argument, and insisted that he had slipped on a broken bottle at a swimming pool.

For the cars written off

'Asprilla can exasperate you, but he can win a game for you on his own'

during accidents in Parma, he blamed unfamiliarity with Italian drivers. For the one-year suspended jail sentence concerning the possession of illegal firearms, and firing a pistol into the air during new year frolics, he blamed the law. "They only arrested me because I am rich and famous," he said.

And for the lost form, the broken marriage that separates him from his beloved son, Santiago, Asprilla suggests that the murder, in Medellin, of Andrés Escobar, the Colombia full back, after the 1994 World Cup, has preyed on his mind.

Some of it is plausible, some of it stretches credibility, but Asprilla says that he feels like a child again. He hopes the slate can be wiped clean. If it can, then, even at such a price, he can help to bring profit to Newcastle, for few players are as swift on the ground, as cunning in the air, or as audaciously potent when faced with apparently forbidding odds around an opponent's goal. If the deal is completed, one hopes for Keegan's sake that the investment pays dividends.

SPORTS LETTERS

County cricket must change

From Mr Raman Subba Row

Sir, It may be that our cricketing lives will be brightened by an England success in the forthcoming World Cup, but even that should not be allowed to paper over our continuing poor performance.

Twelve months ago, I wrote saying that there was no point in blaming the manager, captain and players for England's ongoing disappointing results. The stark reality is that we are simply not good enough on the international circuit because we are not producing the young players of talent like other countries, who then fearlessly encourage them to learn on the job.

We have too many mediocre professional cricketers in this country. We badly need a smaller number of regional working units to which the brightest youngsters would be attached and for which our top cricketers would play — between international matches.

The right sort of cricket to enhance their readiness for England duty. County cricket as a short-term or long-term

genuine fixed points through which competitors must pass are the start and finish lines, about four kilometres apart. Numbers of starters vary from year to year, typically 40 to 100.

It is believed that this is the sole remaining race in the Alps at which all competitors compete side by side. It was always, and remains, a race for the genuine amateur. Split into various categories (under-40, 40-50, 50-60, 60-70 and over-70, etc) it gives every competitor the chance of some success without having to take it all too seriously.

At approximately noon next Thursday, yet another mixed band of British holidaymakers and locals, such as the director of tourism, sports shop proprietors and hoteliers will re-enact, in all seriousness for four or five minutes, downhill ski racing as it used to be.

For most of us, sport should be fun. On this particular day, it must assuredly be.

Yours faithfully,
FREDDIE WHITELAW,
The Downhill Only Ski Club,
3827 Wengen,
Switzerland.

Lottery for yachtsmen

From Mr Rodney Pattisson

Sir, I entirely sympathise with Andy Beadsworth's predicament over shortage of funds for a realistic chance of winning the Olympic gold medal in the Soling class at the forthcoming Games (report, January 25).

The Olympic selectors, headed by Mike McIntyre and Bryn Vale (winners of the Star gold medal in Seoul — chosen, ironically, through a last-minute, sudden-death system) have only themselves to blame for any of our sailors being in this unsatisfactory financial position.

In their wisdom, these selectors chose final trials, which were held last August for all but the Star class. Subsequently, and as intended, the selected few are faced with a year of expensive training abroad until the final competition. Olympic class competition in the UK has died completely for now and until after the Savannah Olympic regatta; sailing do little or no good at all and effective training has to be done abroad.

Perhaps the selectors are sighting with relief once more. The National Lottery has already provided one lifeline with the purchase of boats, but, as the selected are finding, this is just a small fraction of the overall campaign costs involved. Now, thanks to a change in the Lottery rules, a second lifeline has been thrown, which can provide financial help directly to the participants themselves. All that remains is a successful lobbying campaign to the Sports Council, probably by the selectors, but funds are still limited and other sports are equally entitled.

If Lottery money assists Andy Beadsworth again, he should not thank the selectors, who were the cause of the problem, but the nation for its enthusiasm for gambling. Yours sincerely,
RODNEY PATTISSON,
11 Purbeck Avenue,
Hamworthy, Poole, Dorset.

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They must include a daytime telephone number.

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The Style section reveals all



PLUS THE BEST SPORTS COVERAGE

د5 زمان الراحل

Merseyside's finest come under Cup threat from two rejected strikers and one resilient manager



By PETER BALL

LIVERPOOL'S international back three are household names, the Shrewsbury Town forwards they are facing in the FA Cup fourth-round tie at Gay Meadow today are not, but, like Scales, Ruddock and Babb, Steve Anthrobus and Dean Spink have caught the eye of international managers. Spink was signed for Aston Villa by Graham Taylor, Anthrobus for Wimbledon by Bobby Gould.

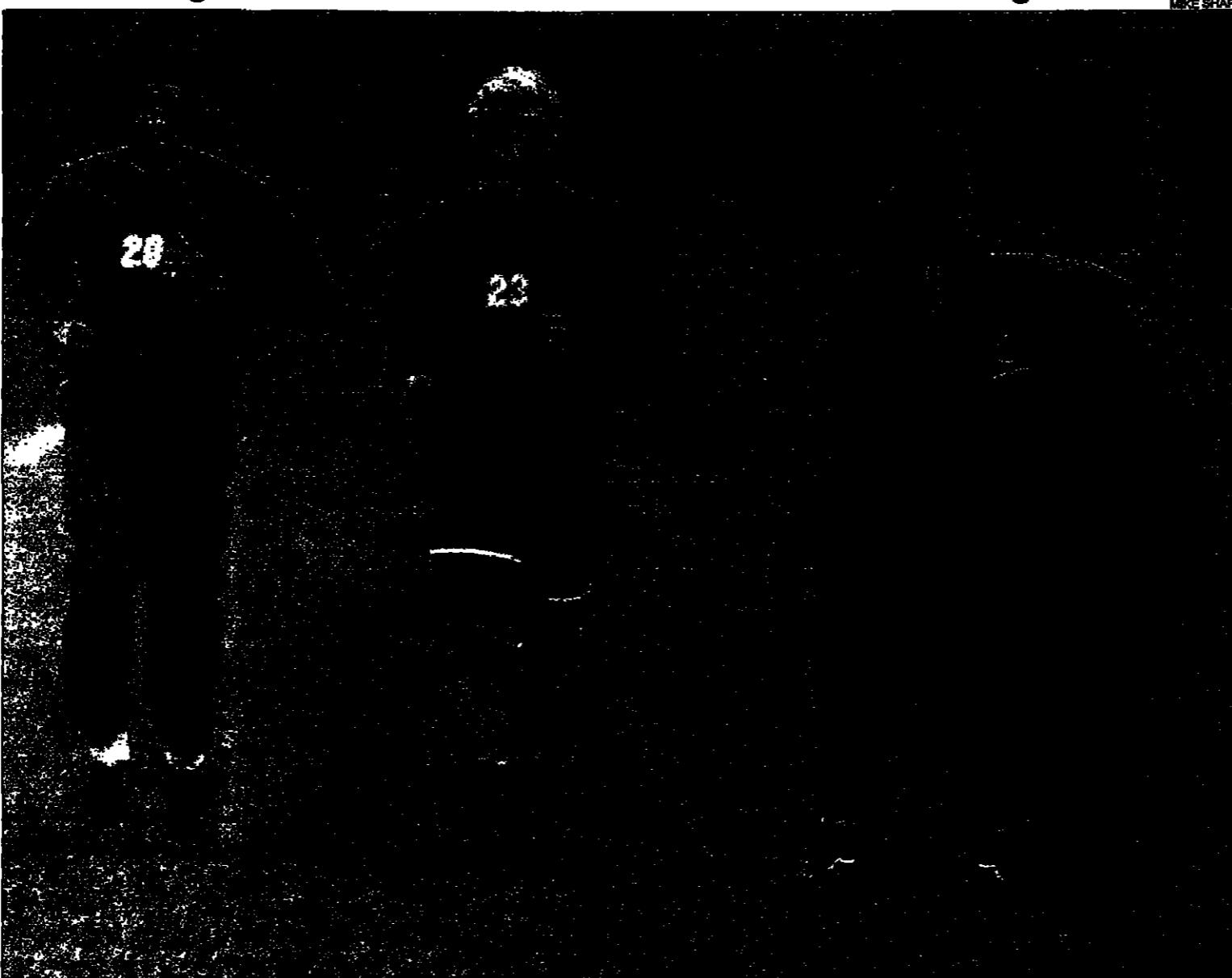
The Liverpool defenders will recognise Anthrobus, for all have played with him — Babb and Ruddock at Millwall, where he started, Scales at Wimbledon, where he arrived as understudy for John Fashanu. That fact alone will give them pause for thought, as will his warning: "If I do play, they won't get any respect off me — until after the game in the bar," Anthrobus said. "I'm going to run myself into the ground against those three."

They had better believe it. Neither he nor Spink quite made it at the top level, although Anthrobus made 30 appearances for Wimbledon under Gould, Ray Harford and Peter Withe, mainly as a powerful left winger in the days when even their wide players were expected to be big and aggressive.

A series of injuries did not help, but when Withe left, Joe Kinnear sent Anthrobus on loan to Peterborough United, Chester City and Dundee before he finally joined Spink at Gay Meadow. It was a big change. "I'm a Cockney, Old Kent Road boy, and I've moved from near Millwall to living in a barn house on a farm now," he said. "It took me a couple of months to adjust, but my football's slowly improving."

He is loving the football. Shrewsbury have an impressive Cup record, with Ipswich Town and Manchester City among their victims when both were leading teams. But, with Fred Davies as manager, it will be football rather than up-and-downs that they will try to beat Liverpool. As they ran through their tactics in a practice game, Anthrobus even set up one chance with a back-heeled pass.

"You'd never have got that out of me at Wimbledon," he said, "but I'm so much more confident now. The gaffer has been brilliant to me, he wants me to play. He says: 'We'll get the Wimbledon style out of you.' Some players respond to being shouted at, but others need support, or being taken aside and told: 'This is what you need to work on, this is what you're good at, and this



Anthrobus, left, and Spink are put through their paces by Davies, the Shrewsbury Town manager, before the visit of Liverpool today

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

ON WEDNESDAY, Adrian Williams, the Wales defender, faced Fabrizio Ravanelli and Gianfranco Zola, the Italy forwards, in a match against Barnsley away, or something like that, but playing United is such a massive game for us. It's always great to pit your wits against international players and, although United will start as odds-on favourites, you never know what might happen. We'll give them respect but not too much of it."

Bobby Mihaylov, the Reading and Bulgaria goalkeeper, is struggling to overcome a persistent thigh injury. Tony Coton and Brian McClain have been added to United's squad, though Alex Ferguson, the manager, is likely to retain the side that won 1-0 at West Ham United on Monday.

Middlesbrough go into their tie against Wimbledon, at the Riverside Stadium, on a dismal run of five successive Premiership defeats. They could be further hindered by the loss of Juninho, Bryan Robson, the player

began to attract attention, and he signed for Aston Villa. He scored 17 goals in 21 games for the reserves, but his lack of an apprenticeship told against him, and he signed for Asa Hartford at Shrewsbury.

Two weeks later, Hartford had gone and John Bond arrived as manager. It was an

unhappy time. Bond did not rate him as a forward, and left him in no doubt. "On one occasion he said: 'I want you to go home for the weekend and think about your career, and then come in on Monday and tell me you're packing the bag in.'"

Spink said: "He said he'd love me as a son, but

I was no use as a footballer. He used to say I'd never make a forward as long as I hadn't got a scar on my head. But I couldn't see that Gary Lineker's head was covered in scars."

They compromised, with Bond moving Spink to centre half, but a serious thigh inju-

ry, which had briefly threatened his life when a blood clot developed, kept him out for six months; when he returned, Bond had gone, and Davies had taken over.

Davies did rate him as a striker, and has been repaid. Spink scoring 20 goals as they won promotion to the Endsleigh Insurance League second division. Last season he was the leading scorer, as he is again now, even though injuries have kept him out at times and he has played in defence at others. "I prefer playing in attack, but I'm happy to help out where needed," he said. "Against Liverpool, I don't mind where I play as long as I'm selected."

Anthrobus will go along with that. He supported Liverpool as a boy and still does, making his admiration for his former colleagues tinged with jealousy. All three command his admiration — Babb ("even as an apprentice, nothing ruffled him"), Ruddock ("two great feet and as hard as nails"), and Scales ("Robert Redford — Mr Perfect") — but the shirt he wants at the end of the match belongs to his hero, another left-winger, John Barnes. "I shall be across the pitch to him and say: 'Sir John, can I have your shirt?'

Romance lights up Rudge's survival game

By DAVID MADDOCK

HE LOOKS for all the world like a second-rate game-show host down on his luck, but appearances, in this case, are deceptive. John Rudge may not smile a lot, he may have the weary expression of a man bowed by the struggle to survive, but he also has a sense of humour.

He needs it. "Sense of humour? Aye, you've got to have that in my job, and more than that," he laughs. "I've been here for 16 years — the Great Train Robbers didn't get a sentence that long."

Rudge is the manager of Port Vale, has been for the past 13 seasons, and was assistant before that. He is the second longest-serving manager in England, at a club that is considered the unfashionable one in the less than glamorous city of Stoke-on-Trent. The club is situated in Burslem — Burslem of Arnold Bennett's Five Towns fame — and Rudge, toiling cheerfully against stacked odds, could be a character straight out of the novels of the Potteries' favourite son. Even the name has that ring about it when you say it slowly: Rudge.

There is, however, very little drudge, or indeed fudge, about the man who has transformed a down-and-out fourth division side into a respectable member of the first division *hoi polloi*.

He has achieved it on a creative mixture of insight and cheerful optimism. "We have always had to produce players here to survive. Bring them in cheap and sell them on at a premium. We've done it with Darren Beckford, Robbie Earle and with Ian Taylor. Not bad that one, we got him for £15,000 and sold him for £1 million. It goes on all the time, but it gets harder and harder. Mind you, we may have another couple. Gareth Griffiths cost £7,000 from Rhyl and he could be a good 'un."

Despite Rudge's instinct for survival, despite his achievement, despite his commitment, there have been times when he came close to being dismissed. "People think I've just gone comfortably along, no pressures here, but I know that I have been one game away from the sack lots of times," he said.

"I think only the support of the fans has saved me. They have been very supportive, but you still end up in the situation where people have short memories, they forget what you have done. In the end, the sack will come — the cliché's true, it is inevitable for a manager."

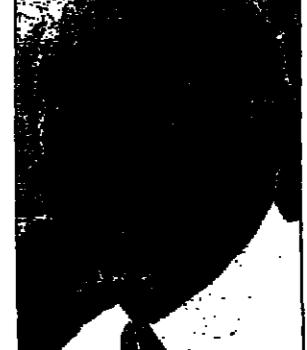
So why does he stay? Why does he wait for the ungrateful refrain of thanks for the memories? There have been

plenty of offers over the years: I am ambitious, but even though there have been jobs offering more money, they have not been the right ones.

"We have built up a good club here, and I am proud of the progress we have made. What's the point of moving on unless the challenge is greater? I still have a big challenge here, improving the profile of Vale, trying somehow to build a platform where we can think about going higher."

So to the FA Cup. Rudge will be out there tomorrow, win or lose against Everton in the fourth round at Goodison Park today, looking for the next signing to keep Vale above water. But he cannot resist the lure of the Cup's romance for a moment.

Rudge watched with increasing agitation as Stockport County threatened an upset against Everton in the last round. "I thought, 'Bloody hell, we've played Stockport quite enough times, thank you!'. Thank goodness Everton pulled themselves together.



Rudge: optimistic

together. It's a great thing the FA Cup, it's something for the whole town to enjoy. We get a bit of cash — which helps — and we get a chance to have a go at a big club.

"We've got a good record you know — beaten Tottenham, Southampton and Derby by in my time. If they have an off day, then we've got a chance of doing it again."

With his balding pate and straight-man's face, Rudge will never cut a glamorous dash in the managerial fast lane. His experience, and ability, demands more, but he could be left forever at Port Vale, living on the scraps from the rich man's table.

In Bennett's novels, the Golden Angel of the Five Towns looks down imperiously from Burslem Town Hall. It is there now, perched atop the Burslem Civic Centre, its hopeful smile stretching over the rooftops towards Vale Park in the distance. Rudge will recognise that smile.

Midfield trio enrich South Africa

By ROB HUGHES
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

THE rhythm of the African Nations' Cup changes abruptly this weekend, now that eight teams remain. The quarter-finals contain the essence of knockout competition, and in three of the four South African venues the promise of a contest between the explosive, unpredictable southern talents and the more controlled techniques of Arab-influenced teams from the north of the continent — Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia — who have all made light of the handicap of their Ramadan fast.

"I want to say I hope my country brings peace," Weah said on the eve of his second and last appearance. "I hope my people will lay down arms and see that we can learn to live together."

Weah is back in Italy with AC Milan for their Serie A match tomorrow. Today, in Johannesburg, the hosts welcome back three midfield players who were absent when they lost to Egypt in their final group game.

Egypt are led by Ahmed El Kass, also scoring freely thanks to the creativity of Doctor Khumalo, who gives

pace and penetration down the right. Innocent "Iron Man" Buthelezi and "Shoes" Moshoeu are expected to provide the impetus for South Africa to overcome the control that Moussa Sidi, the Auxerre play-maker, exerts for Algeria.

Tonight, possibly the tie of the round, Zambia meet Egypt in Bloemfontein. Here is proof that old players, like old soldiers, never die. Kalusha Bwalya, 32, a survivor of the plane crash that killed 18 Zambia players three years ago, has scored five times in two games, proving he is as left with his left foot as he is dignified in manner.

Finally, if the rain relents in Durban, Gabon, the outsiders, compete against the disciplined Tunisians.

FOURTH ROUND FORM GUIDE

	P	W	L	Favourites	Close encounters
Liverpool	50	35	15	Seven clubs have never beaten them in the FA Cup. United are the only ones to have done so.	Two ties feature clubs standing at the top of the table. The Premiership clash (one of four in this round) of Chelsea and Queens Park Rangers should be close but Nottingham Forest's home advantage should prove decisive against Oxford United.
Everton	48	35	13		Nottingham Forest v Oxford 1 0 1
Sheffield U	47	32	15		Nottingham Forest v Chelsea 1 1 1
Manchester U	47	29	18		
Chelsea	47	29	18		
Man City	42	25	17		
Aston Villa	39	24	15		
Middlesbrough	38	21	15		
Wolverhampton	38	20	19		
West Ham	38	20	19		
Bolton	37	20	17		
Sheff Utd	40	19	21		
Wolves	37	18	18		
Leeds	37	18	17		
Southampton	28	17	13		
Ipswich	28	15	12		
Huddersfield	30	12	18		
Charlton	25	11	14		
QPR	24	8	16		
Coventry	24	8	16		
Grimsby	19	8	11		
Swindon	7	2	1		
Wimbledon	10	7	3		
Port Vale	19	6	13	Charlton v Bury 2 0 0	Two ties feature clubs standing at the top of the table. The Premiership clash (one of four in this round) of Chelsea and Queens Park Rangers should be close but Nottingham Forest's home advantage should prove decisive against Oxford United.
Sheffield	18	6	13	Charlton v Man City 2 0 0	Nottingham Forest v Oxford 2 2 1
Brentford	18	5	11	Charlton v Port Vale 2 0 0	Nottingham Forest v Chelsea 2 0 1
Oxford Utd	13	5	8	Brentford v Peterborough 1 0 0	
Oldham	12	4	8	Middlesbrough v Wimbledon 1 1 0	
Peterborough	12	4	8	Reading v Manchester U 1 4 4	
Walsall	11	3	8	Swindon v Wolves 3 1 0	
Reading	11	3	8	Tottenham v Wolves 3 1 0	
Crewe	7	1	6	West Ham v Grimsby 1 0 0	

JULIAN DESBOROUGH

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Chang to meet German in Australian Open final after crushing victory over Agassi

Becker adds refinement to power play

FROM STUART JONES
TENNIS CORRESPONDENT
IN MELBOURNE

THE Australian Open final tomorrow might be acclaimed as a tennis match made in heaven. Michael Chang is forever mentioning that "the Lord" is on his side and Boris Becker is so imposing at the moment that his semi-final victim reckoned that "God could have been up the other end, and he still would have beaten him easily".

Although they have been blessed by favourable draws (each has met only one seed), the pair have merited their survival through an earthly quality, hard labour. Over the past year or two, both have been working on refining their games, which they might already have considered to be sufficiently strong.

Becker, 23, has been an established member of the top ten for a decade and Chang, more than four years his junior, since 1992. Multi-millionaires, they could have spent the rest of their careers accruing further riches and leading leisurely lifestyles. Yet both recognised contrasting deficiencies and strove to eradicate them.

Chang, though the most efficient of retrievers, was short of power. Becker, though intimidating as one of the world's leading exponents of the serve and volley, lacked speed and consistency in his ground strokes.

Hence, Chang has not won a grand slam title since the French Open in 1989, when he was only 17. Becker was the Wimbledon champion at the same tender age but he has not claimed any of the four crowns since the Australian Open in 1991, which elevated him to No 1 in the rankings.

His resurgence was notable at Wimbledon, where he was the runner-up in July, and at Frankfurt, where he won the ATP tour championship finals in November.

He has become increasingly convincing here, too, over the past fortnight. "Once I'd had ten sets [five of them against Greg Rusedski] in the first two rounds, I felt I'd had enough practice," as put it. Mark Woodforde had cleverly harvested for his own benefit the



Chang stretches for a volley and loses his grip on his racket during his straight-sets semi-final victory over Agassi in Melbourne yesterday

power of Mark Philippoussis and Thomas Enqvist but, against Becker, he was overwhelmed 6-4, 6-2, 6-0 in little more than an hour and a half.

"It wasn't too much fun," the sentimental favourite on Australia Day bemoaned. "It was like facing a bulldozer."

He shares the common belief that Becker is now virtually irresistible and even considered backing his opinion with half of his prize-money, £35,000. "He is blasting the first or second serve and then coming in, and that's the way to beat Michael Chang," Woodforde said.

Andre Agassi agrees. "Boris has the game to take Michael's spot out of the equation."

His assertion that he could

was his sane prediction. However, Agassi's excuse for his performance in the semi-final against Chang was as bizarre and nonsensical as his conduct during the match.

After his right wrist had been surgically repaired two years ago, he had undergone a similar metamorphosis as the two finalists are now. He rapidly developed a genuine rivalry with Pete Sampras, whom this week he has again deposed as the world No 1, but there are fears that he is regressing. The evidence for considering that he may be going back to his old self and abusing his prodigious talent has been spread across the past few months.

Apart from the odd bolt of lightning ("he hit some unbelieveable shots"), Chang com-

peted in the Davis Cup final because of an aggravated injury was less than persuasive. Before entering the championships, he knocked his knee on an iron stair

mented) Agassi once more gave the impression that, win or lose, he did not care. More than once, he let go a ball that had been bothered to move, would seemingly have been within his reach.

He opened the opening set in only 26 minutes and, in capitulating 6-1, 6-4, 7-6, including the last seven points of the tie-break in a row, the unforced errors he sprayed amounted to 60. That is 11 more than Becker, Chang and Woodforde put together.

Agassi admitted to feeling "flat", a curious confession in view of the exuberance of Becker, who had overall played only two fewer than his 22 sets. Mysteriously, he claimed that "the wind played

havoc out there". Neither Chang nor anybody else noticed anything other than an occasional swirling breeze.

"I could have gone out and run down every ball for as long as I could and made it look like a close match," he rammed. "Nevertheless, I am not trying to make it look like a close match. I am trying to win it." He could have foiled us all.

□ The Grand Slam Cup, which is to be relocated from Frankfurt to Hanover this year, is also to move in the calendar next year. It will probably be held in October, rather than in December, in the crowded weeks after the finals of the ATP tour champion-

ship and the Davis Cup.

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So the International Tennis Federation (ITF) has proposed limiting the length to 29 inches. Most rackets in use in both the professional and amateur game are 27 or 28 inches but Chang has been using a longer one over the past year to help him to become more competitive at the higher levels of a sport that has become dominated by the power-servers.

Chang says that using the bigger racket has helped him to achieve greater control and power in his service, and it was shown to its full advantage in his straight-sets win over Agassi yesterday.

However, an intriguing proposal from Croatia would avoid this by making the 470 class, at present sailed in separate fleets by men and women, an open event.

Among the top contenders

for the new class are the two

British-made asymmetric

two-trapeze boats, the Laser

5000 and the Boss. Also in the frame is the Australian 49er, the Flying Dutchman, the RS4000 and the B14E skiff

design.

Among the most enthusiastic

proponents of the move to

include the fastest and most

exciting new boats is Mike

Jackson, the British delegate

on the ITF council. "There is

a formal policy that we should

have trials for such a boat — we need to demonstrate the boats to the world in this way," he said. "There are

enough people on the ITF council who believe this type of sailing should be properly represented at the Olympics."

Opposition is expected, especially from Eastern Europe, where the new boats are perceived as too expensive and too thinly spread.

New boats sail into reckoning for the Olympics

FROM EDWARD GORMAN
SAILING CORRESPONDENT
IN MIAMI

PAUL HENDERSON, the president of the International Yacht Racing Union (IYRU), confirmed yesterday that a wide range of so-called "high-performance" dinghies are to be assessed for possible inclusion in the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000.

Up to ten member nations of the world's governing body of sailing, including Britain, have applied to hold evaluation or observation trials of possible contenders for the new class. Henderson told a press conference at the Olympic Classes Regatta here.

Olympic sailing is restricted by the International Olympic Committee to ten events, with around 440 competitors. It is likely, therefore, that one existing class — possibly the Laser or the Finn — may have to be dropped to make room for the new boat.

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The Association of Tennis

Professionals

has already

moved to restrict the length of rackets to 29 inches on all tournaments on its tour as from this month.

In its latest news bulletin,

the ITF noted that if Martin, Goran Ivanisevic and Richard Krajicek are all 6ft 4in tall, they could be hitting even more aces than they already do if they were to use 32-inch-long rackets, the maximum size permitted under present rules.

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Saturday portrait: Jerry Jones, by Oliver Holt

Infamous owner who has sacked his way to another Super Bowl

Jerry Jones likes to tell people about the cartoon that hangs on his office wall at the Dallas Cowboys' Valley Ranch training complex. It shows two vultures sitting on a branch. One is saying to the other: "Patience, hell. I'm going to kill something."

Jones has never been much of a one for patience. When he bought the Cowboys for \$140 million in 1989 and became at a stroke one of the most powerful figures in American sport, he warned he would involve himself in every aspect of the running of the club, "from socks to jocks", and promptly sacked the team's legendary coach, Tom Landry.

Two years ago, after his money and his trading skill had helped to transform the team from the laughing-stock of the National Football League (NFL) into back-to-back Super Bowl champions, he fired Landry's successor, Jimmy Johnson, after a glorious soap opera of disagreements about Jones's meddling in the running of the team. Imagine Sir John Hall firing Kevin Keegan at the end of this season with Newcastle United newly-crowned champions and you might begin to appreciate the impact it had.

Less than a month after that, he told friends that 500 coaches could have done what Johnson did and then set about proving his point by hiring Barry Switzer, a man who had been out of the sport altogether for five years and who had never coached in the NFL before. Switzer was the antithesis of Johnson, content to play the role of Jones's yes-man.

This year, Jones's patience has run out with the NFL too. He grew tired of the system that forced each team's revenue to be shared out equally and struck his own advertising deals with Pepsi and Nike, deals that conflicted with the league's agreements with Coca-Cola and Reebok and are likely to widen the gap between the haves and have-nots. The other owners are suing him for \$300 million; he is counter-suing for \$750 million.

There is, however, one area in which Jones has been obliged to bide his time. He may have thought he had seen the last of Johnson when he gave him a \$2 million golden goodbye to go with

his sacking but he has been unable to prevent his ghost from floating over everything the Cowboys do, haunting every minor failure with the promise of what might have been had he stayed.

When Johnson took over as the Miami Dolphins' head coach last month, the stakes suddenly got higher. If Johnson won a Super Bowl with his new team before the Cowboys proved Jones had been right to sack him by winning themselves under Switzer, the Dallas owner would face humiliation. Well, the Cowboys will play in Super Bowl XXX in Phoenix, Arizona, tomorrow and only the Pittsburgh Steelers stand between Jones and the dispatch of one more prey. The Jerry and Jimmy Show has gone prime time again.

Jones, 53, looks like a handsome cowboy, too. He has recovered all but \$10 million of his initial outlay and the team is now worth \$190 million. When he became the owner, only six of the 118 luxury suites at Texas Stadium were leased. There are now 368 suites and most of them are booked solid until 2008. Every home game since the beginning of 1990 has been a sell-out.

But Jerry Jones is no Jack Walker. He is in it for himself, for the money, the publicity and the profile. The team that loves to call itself America's Team has found itself with America's Owner, hard-nosed, ruthless and power-hungry. Even his critics acknowledge he has exploited the Cowboys as a corporate entity more successfully than any rival owner has done with his team.

Popularity, though, has eluded him and condemnation is usually only a beat and a defeat away. Part of the problem was that, before he left, Johnson had managed to undermine Jones's reputation by poking fun at his attempts to involve himself in the signing of players and in decisions on which college students should be picked in the annual draft.

Johnson told a reporter that Jones had come to him after the 1990 season and told him: "I want it to be Jerry and Jimmy, not just Jimmy." Johnson also told friends that he had been under orders to pretend to be consulting Jones when the cameras turned to him on draft day.

This is the heart of everybody's problem with Jones. Most of the United States wants to like the Dallas Cowboys but they see a man at the helm who seems to be using the team as his playground, a vehicle for acting out his coaching fantasies, without possessing any of the qualifications or having the nerve to be candid about it rather than using Switzer as a front man.

"I believe I could coach in the NFL," he said recently. "In fact, if I hadn't been so determined to be a financial success when I came out of college, there is no question I would have gone into coaching."

That admission apart, though, he protests his innocence vehemently. "I simply saw a knot on

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he protests his innocence vehe-

mently. "I simply saw a knot on

the tyne and, before it blew out, I

replaced it," Jones said of the loss

of Johnson. "He could have fired

some heavy internal shots. If he

had stayed, there would have been

quite a Jimmy and Jerry Show

here last season and the damage

would have been horrible."

People who think that it's

meddling when I involve myself in

the football aspects of this business

aren't looking at the real world.

Decisions about what happens on

the field — between the white lines

— are made by the coaches. I never

second-guess them. But there is

also the financial area, which

includes salaries and negotiations

with the players, the acquiring of

players either through trades or

draft decisions."

These skills are not unique to

football. Until 1989, neither Jimmy

nor I had ever made a trade or a

draft pick. But, if I hadn't been a

pretty good trader, I wouldn't have

had the money to buy the Cowboys

in the first place. Having said all

that, if someone still wants to call it

meddling, screw 'em."

And so, throughout this week,

while the Steelers owner, Dan

Rooney, has remained in the

background, Jones has taken the

stage before Switzer at the team's

daily press conferences, talking

about how practice has gone and

how he is mulling over which

players may come and go at the

end of the season.

On Tuesday, media day, where

when the hundreds of journalists

covering the Super Bowl inter-

viewed the players at the Sun

Stadium, Jones took his

place in the stands a few yards

away from his quarterback, Troy

Aikman. There were almost as

many reporters around him as any

of the leading players. The next

day, Johnson held a press confer-

ence in the Phoenix Civic Plaza. He

did not want to detract attention

from the game, he said, it was just

that there had been so many

requests.

Before he left the stage, he

gave one final analysis of his

nemesis. "Jerry Jones is a driven

man and an intelligent man," he

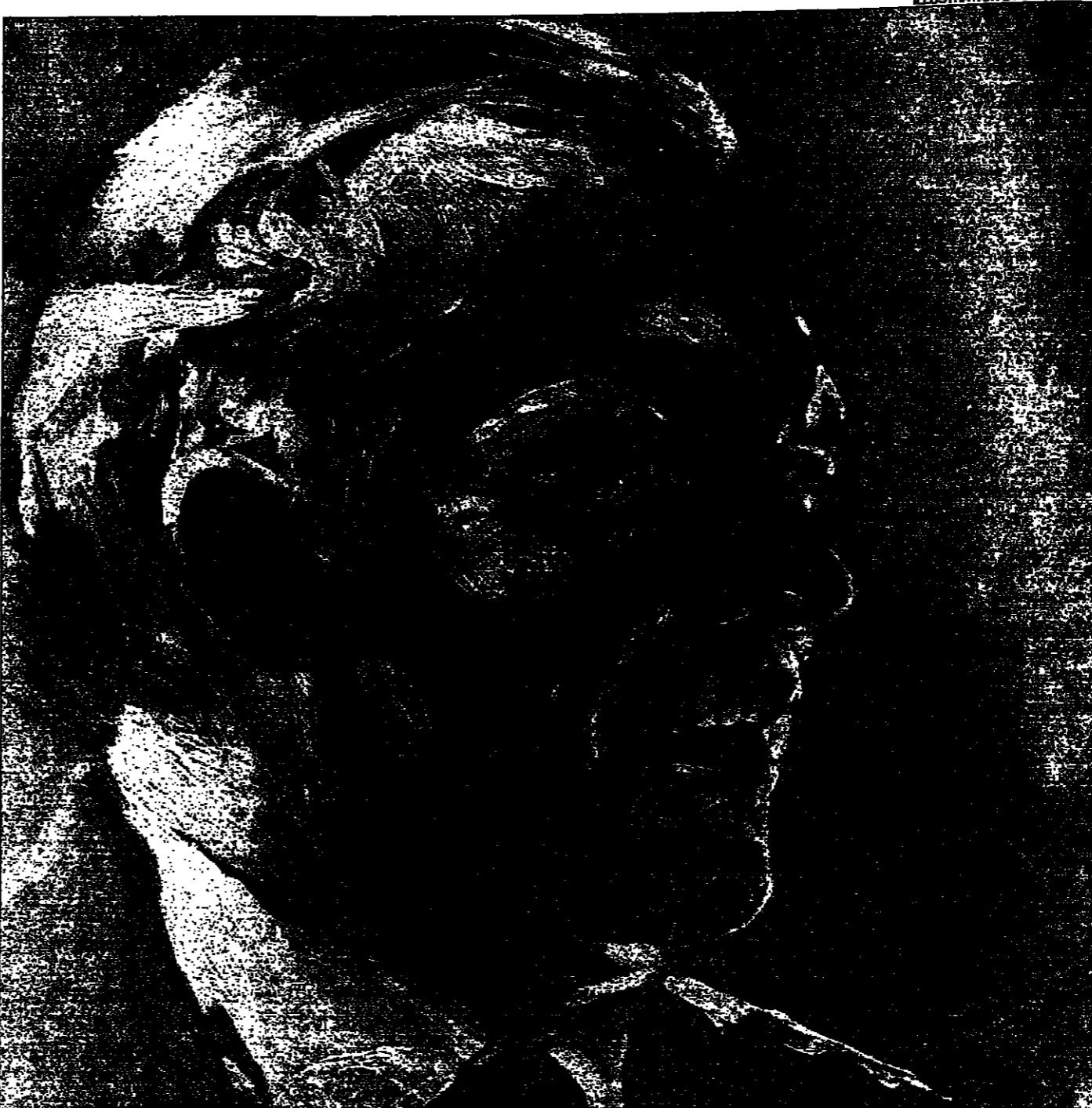
said. "He is the finest salesman I

have ever met, the finest business-

man I have ever known. Jerry

wants a lot of things. In fact, Jerry

wants everything."

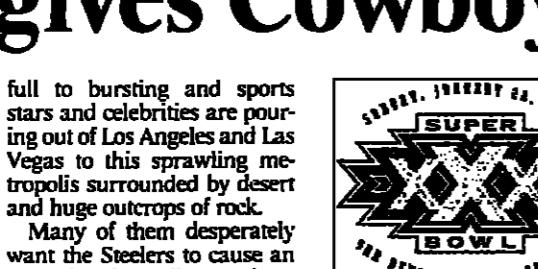


Smith gives Cowboys lethal weapon

FROM OLIVER HOLT
IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA

THE supermarket tabloid that festoons the checkouts of most stores here is hot with the news that scientists have found the salty remains of Lot's wife in Jordan, that the crew of the doomed space shuttle, Challenger, cheered after their craft had blown up and that a new deadly virus can turn home computers into bombs. If it had a sports section, it would be saying that the Pittsburgh Steelers have fighting chance of victory in Super Bowl XXX here tomorrow.

The party is in full swing now: hotels and bars were empty because of the prohibitive prices until Thursday are



full to bursting and sports stars and celebrities are pouring out of Los Angeles and Las Vegas to this sprawling metropolis surrounded by desert and huge outcrops of rock. Many of them desperately want the Steelers to cause an upset, but the Dallas Cowboys are already acting like the victors most people assume they are going to be. They ride around town in stretch limousines and swagger into nightclubs, barely able to disguise their expectations of a straightforward triumph in Sun Devil Stadium.

The Cowboys are not quite the team they were when they won back-to-back Super Bowls against the Buffalo Bills in 1993 and 1994. They have lost a couple of key defensive

players: their performances this season have been worryingly inconsistent and some of their biggest stars, including the quarterback, Troy Aikman, and pass rusher, Charles Haley, are less than fully fit. Their coach, Barry Switzer, though far from the dour, bare-faced media portray, is still surrounded by lingering doubts about his ability. But they still have the

Wales should not ignore prodigal son laden with riches

The Wales selectors should have found a way of incorporating Jonathan Davies in the squad to play England next week. If the English squad might be rejuvenated by the inclusion of an 18-year old, Wales on the other hand, might have done the same with a player 15 years his senior.

Welsh rugby has much to learn from Davies. He has fresh ideas and he questions rugby's possibilities more than most of the present coaches. If this raises suspicions about the abilities of the trainers, both in and out of Wales, then so be it. Evidence to encourage a greater faith in them is in short supply.

It should be hoped that Davies's exclusion is not

based on any prejudice, because he is the prodigal son upon whom too much attention has already been lavished since his departure from rugby league. But his return to the national colours, which might be thought too hasty, has a sounder base.

True, having undergone a hernia operation, he has not played much and it may be in his best interests to lie low for a while. But if should not preclude his selection at some future stage.

He has played only twice at stand-off half since his return. Cardiff have preferred him at full back and at centre although he has played rugby league in those positions he had not done so in the union game before. Presumably,

Cardiff are working on the premise that, if he could perform there in the northern game, then he should do so with equal facility in union. This is not quite the case. The easy transfer from one code to the other is a perception that is treacherously unreliable.

Certainly, one of the positions he should not contemplate playing again is centre. The feature of Davies which sets him apart from other stand-off halves is that he is a runner by nature. But the way the game is played, crowded midfields are no place for him.

Coaches want either play-makers who pass, kick and set up others to run — which Davies could be but he would be underselling himself — or



GERALD DAVIES

Rugby Commentary

those of the bulldozing sort, of which Davies is most certainly not.

His intuitive play, timing and awareness could see him play with aplomb at full back. Still the most underrated position, it is not always influential. The player is too often too far away. Davies likes to be where the action is. No, to see the best of Davies, he needs to lie at the heart and mystery of the game, at stand-off half.

Neil Jenkins and Arwel Thomas occupy the position in the Wales squad and both are fine players. Jenkins, for his part, is unfairly criticised, while Thomas has a career to make. The former is unjustly treated with unwarranted attacks on his play, such as the crowd's response to Thomas in the match against Italy.

Thomas kicked the ball as often as Jenkins might have done. Thomas, as he admitted, did not kick with the

accuracy he wished. Yet the crowd warmed to him in the way they rarely do to Jenkins. Thomas's misfires had a sympathetic response, while the crowd grew impatient with Jenkins. Sport is ever partial and not always just but Jenkins's contribution in the way that he has accumulated points and the tackles he makes, is unfailingly impressive.

If Davies could not get to wear the national jersey on this occasion, his inclusion in the squad among so many young players might not only prove instructive but inspiring. He is what might be called a big name.

He has not only played on the world stage and scaled some great heights, but he

has also moved and gripped events in a way no other Welsh player can be said to have done in recent years. Young players would listen to him, he also exudes a cheerful optimism, a dose of which would be beneficial to Welsh rugby.

Having carried a care-worn, hang-dog look for so long, nothing would become a Wales team more than to run out at Twickenham with a bit of a swagger. One of the most pleasing sights when Wales played Italy was to see the two Thomases, Arwel and Justin, parading on the Arms Park with a sparkle in their eyes.

Fresh-faced and eager, they were not overawed by the occasion. An air of enthusiasm encircled them. They

looked comfortable in the jersey.

Sometimes, it is instructive to look at a player when the game has briefly come to a stop. I here was about the two Thomases a stillness that was not passive. There was a sense of something stirring: an impatience to be getting on with things. Not so much of the greyhounds panting excitedly in the traps, but of the imperturbable athlete about to enter his blocks before the gun blasts of animation held in check.

There was an unfearing look of daring-do. Which is where Jonathan Davies comes in. He is one of them. He should be around to nurture such talent lest any coach knock it out of them.

RFU urges clubs to keep cup on schedule

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

WINTER, which has already caused a hiatus in rugby union's Courage Clubs Championship, has laid an icy finger on the Pilkington Cup today. Snow in the North, combined with extremely cold winds, has disrupted the best-laid plans and four of today's eight fifth-round ties have been postponed.

Yet the lowest and the highest of the 16 clubs involved remain optimistic that their matches will proceed. Wimington Park, having invested so much in the most important game in their history — against Wasps — will be desperately disappointed if a pitch inspection this morning forces a postponement, while Leicester are confident that their meeting with Saracens will go ahead.

In any event, the quarter-final draw will be held at Twickenham on Monday, with clubs required to play postponed fifth-round ties at a mutually-convenient date before February 24, quarter-final day. Already West Hartlepool are contemplating the possibility of playing Coventry next weekend, even though this would involve a clash with the internationals.

Both Leeds, who play

London Irish, and Wakefield, who receive the holders, Bath, will check playing conditions this morning, but Wakefield have already appealed for volunteers to turn out at College Grove in case snow needs to be cleared. If the match does go on, there will not be the intriguing sight of brother versus brother on the respective wings.

Bath field Jon Sleightholme, their most recent international, but his brother, Andrew, has not been chosen by Wakefield. Nevertheless, it will be a welcome return for the England wing to the club he represented before joining Bath in 1994, in a XV missing the international quartet of Simon Geoghegan, Mike Catt, Ben Clarke and David Hilton.

Bath were amazed that Geoghegan came through Ireland's defeat by Scotland despite a strained hamstring, while the two England players, who are due to join squad training at Strawberry Hill tomorrow, when the team to play Wales will be named, are nursing knee and groin injuries respectively. Clarke's absence gives Eric Peters a rare first-XV appearance at No 8, though he will be buoyed up by his part in Scotland's

success in Dublin: the way things are going, Peters will be able to count more representative appearances per season than in his club's senior side.

Joe Miles, the Ireland selector, will hope that the game at Leeds goes ahead for he is due to watch David Humphreys play at stand-off half for London Irish. As a bonus, he will be able to see Richard McCartney make his debut in the second row for Leeds.

McCartney, the off-side Ulsterman, late of Sale, is one of

several acquisitions made by the fourth-division club who, on Tuesday, plan the announcement of a ground-sharing scheme with Leeds Rugby League Club.

Humphreys enjoyed such a

good University match in Oxford's colours that his international prospects were immediately revived. He played on the winning side in the A international with Tony Diprose leading the team.

Leicester have a bone to pick with Saracens. The mid-Nov-

ember defeat they suffered at

Southgate may ultimately mean the loss of their league title. They catch Saracens in a weakened condition for Brian Davies, their captain, tore ligaments earlier this month and his place at scrum half goes to Philip Friel, with Tony Diprose leading the team.

Leicester also prevents Andy Tunnicliffe and Jon Green playing, which gives Matt Singer his first-team debut at full back. Singer, from Newark, won his Blue for Cambridge last month. In the back row, Diprose moves to the blind-side flank with Richard Hill, who missed the league defeat at Orrell where Davies was injured, playing No 8.

Leicester have opted for

James Overend at centre, ahead of the more experienced Richie Robinson. Midfield is an area of continuing concern, particularly since Stuart Potter, the England A centre, will now miss another six weeks of a frustrating season after an injury at Bedford last Friday.

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Leicester

Home Office may have last word in deal taking Colombian to Newcastle

Asprilla's arrival remains on ice

By PETER BALL

NEWCASTLE United will have to wait for a work permit before they can add Faustino Asprilla to their payroll. Parma's Colombian striker stayed on Tyneside long enough to have a medical yesterday, but returned to Italy without signing for the FA Carling Premiership leaders.

"You can't sign without a work permit," Freddie Fletcher, the Newcastle chief executive, said at a snowy St James' Park. "He has finalised some details, but now he has gone back to Italy."

The work permit should be a formality, persuading the Home Office's immigration department that Asprilla is a desirable resident may be slightly more difficult. "If the immigration department is not happy about his criminal record he won't be allowed in," a Department of Employment spokesman said yesterday.

Of the player's ability there is little doubt. "Kevin [Keegan]

He could bring the championship to the North East for the first time in 67 years, but if his wayward moods get the better of things, he could also contaminate the dream.

Rob Hughes, page 42

the Newcastle manager] rates him very highly, and other people believe he is one of the three best players in the world," Sir John Hall, the Newcastle chairman, said, with a possible excess of enthusiasm.

A member of the Colombia team that performed so limply in the 1994 World Cup, Asprilla made a significant contribution to Parma's success in winning the European Cup Winners' Cup and the UEFA Cup. Keegan obviously believes that he can help Newcastle to their first championship since 1927.

But for the £6.7 million that will take his spending this season over £20 million, Keegan is also signing a player with a chequered history on and off the pitch. If the former will not interest the immigration authorities, the latter will.

Asprilla has a criminal record for illegally possessing a firearm after firing a gun in the streets of Medellin. As part

of a suspended prison sentence, he is required to report monthly to the Colombian embassy. Although he was allowed in as a visitor yesterday, a firearm offence means his record will be examined closely before he is granted residency.

The incident in Medellin, where he fired the gun into the air, may be put down to youthful excess, but in conjunction with other incidents, including a violent argument with a bus driver and several car crashes, it makes a

chequered history that may give the Home Office pause for thought. But Sir John is likely to press the case with conviction.

"I am excited like a child again to be joining Newcastle," Asprilla said. "I don't care about what is in the past. The slate is wiped clean."

Keegan, though, may also find that he is a maverick in the changing-room. He has fallen out with both the coach and general manager at Parma. Asprilla's complaints about feeling cold in his early

days in Italy do not bode well for a long stay in the North East, but the honeymoon period may last long enough for Newcastle to win the Premiership and justify the transaction.

The outlay may soon be even greater, with a move for David Batty, the midfield player out-of-favour at Blackburn Rovers, still in the pipeline. Blackburn were at pains yesterday to deny that Batty had failed to report for training since a discussion with Harford last Friday.

"I don't know where these stories come from," Robert Coar, the Blackburn chairman, said yesterday. "He trained on Wednesday. With no game this weekend, the players have had time off this week, but I expect him to be there when they report back next week."

Batty has been unhappy since he was substituted against Ipswich Town in the FA Cup replay, and then left out of last week's game against Sheffield Wednesday. Although Blackburn insist that they have had no official offer from Newcastle, talks have taken place.

Blackburn are understood to want £4 million with Newcastle valuing the player at £3.5 million, still a lot for a player who missed nearly a year with injury and has struggled to recover his form since his return. Keegan, however, sees his combative qualities as a useful addition to the squad, and his experience in winning the title with both Leeds United and Blackburn could be invaluable.

The Birmingham City manager, Barry Fry, is aiming to increase his huge squad by signing the Liverpool midfield player Jan Molby, who has completed a loan spell with his club's first division rivals Norwich City. Fry was so impressed by the 32-year-old Denmark international in his two appearances against Birmingham in the Coca-Cola Cup quarter-finals that he wants to recruit him.

Shrewsbury's hopes, page 43
Resilient Rudge, page 43



Asprilla, the Colombia international, is met by Newcastle United supporters who gathered in the snow at St James' Park yesterday to greet him as he arrived from Italy

Premiership clubs earn European reprieve

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

ALAN SUGAR's cussed refusal to accept apparent injustice — and the combined weight of the Football Association (FA) and the FA Premier League — earned Tottenham Hotspur and Wimbledon a reprieve yesterday. The two FA Carling Premiership clubs had their one-year European suspensions quashed at a hearing in Geneva.

Sugar, the Tottenham chairman, and Ned Hammam, a Wimbledon director, spent 20 minutes giving evidence to the appeals panel of Uefa, the sport's European governing body. Rick Parry, chief executive of the FA Premier League, and Graham Kelly, chief executive of the FA, were observers.

Uefa had originally imposed the punishments because Tottenham and Wimbledon fielded weakened sides, and played at Brighton's Goldstone Ground, in the inaugural Intertoto

Cup last summer. After hearing new evidence, Uefa withdrew the suspensions and replaced them with fines totalling about £180,000.

"The initial decision was made without the knowledge and information we had available today," Sugar said. "The committee members who sat in on the appeal admitted that had that information been available, the punishment would not have been so severe. We don't see this as some kind of victory. All we have done is get back to the position that 90 other clubs in England have anyway, which is the right to qualify for Europe."

Parry revealed that the fines would be paid by all the Premiership clubs, not just Tottenham and Wimbledon. "That was agreed at their last meeting," he said. "It was a collective decision, and so the costs will be shared." It was also decided that English clubs will not enter the Intertoto Cup this summer.

The board of appeal decided to amend the suspension and fine both clubs." Salvatore Cuccu, a Uefa spokesman, said, "This was based on new facts and the comprehensive documentation supplied. The board decided that the sanction imposed had been too severe."

Wales open their 1998 World Cup qualifying campaign with matches against San Marino — away on June 2 and at home on August 31. The programme for Bobby Gould, the Wales manager, then gets harder, with successive fixtures against Holland, the European championship finalists.

Gould and David Collins, general secretary of the Football Association of Wales, agreed the group seven schedule in Amsterdam yesterday. Wales conclude their games in Turkey and Belgium.

On the recommendation of Uefa, the Spanish league has agreed to cut its first division from 22 to 18 teams by

1998. It expanded unexpectedly last summer, after the Spanish authorities demoted several teams to the second division for rules violations and then allowed them to return, joining the two clubs who had been promoted.

Steve Stone, the England and Nottingham Forest midfield player, has signed an improved 3½-year contract at the City Ground. "I've been here 8½ years," he said. "Forest have stuck by me when things were not going well so I've stuck by them."

Phil Neal, the former Coventry City manager, has taken over at Cardiff City, the Endsleigh Insurance League third division club. It is his first job since leaving Highfield Road 11 months ago. Neal replaces Kenny Hibbitt, who has moved to director of football at Ninian Park.

WALES WORLD CUP QUALIFYING FIXTURES:
1998: Jun 2: San Marino (away); Aug 31: San Marino (home); Oct 6: Holland (home); Nov 6: Holland (away); Dec 1: Turkey (home); 1999: Mar 29: Turkey (away); Apr 27: Belgium (home); Aug 22: Turkey (away); Oct 11: Belgium (away).

In a week which brought the early blows between devotees of *Test Match Special* and the *Today* programme over priorities for the cricket World Cup, the historic significance of the words "Welcome indeed, welcome to Barcelona" passed unnoticed. But, in a year or two, when listeners can choose their own football commentaries, flick to the horse racing or the rugby league or back in uninterrupted coverage of international cricket, the introduction by Ron Jones to commentary on the Olympic Games hockey qualifying match between Great Britain and Holland on Thursday should be fondly remembered.

There was a select audience for the broadcast, the first international transmission by the BBC's new, experimental, Digital Audio Broadcasting

Andrew Longmore on the advances that should mean more choice on the airwaves

allow greater flexibility of programming as well as better reception, and its place at the forefront of the £10 million development mirrors the pioneering contribution of boxing and football towards the growth of the moving picture almost exactly a century ago. The first DAB broadcast came from Blackburn Rovers' 2-1 victory over Southampton in early October, the second featured a complete racecard from Ascot.

In time, listeners to a DAB set will be able to choose their own sport. France v England from the five nations' rugby championship (if there is still such a thing) commentary from the FA Carling Premier

ship, rugby league, racing.

At Wimborne, there would be a choice of commentary from Centre and No 1 courts at the Olympics, between archery and athletics. Followers of *Test Match Special* would have their own station for the duration of the Test and, in theory at least, supporters of Premiership clubs would be able to tune in to their own team every Saturday. The limits will be financial rather than technological, the pace of development governed by the manufacturers as well as the broadcasters.

The BBC emphasises these are still the "first of the first steps", but by March 1998 60

per cent of the United Kingdom should be within range of DAB transmission and the first radios should be on the market, cost as yet unknown. "Sport will be very high up our list of priorities," Furell said. "But we have to do a lot of research first. Find out what people want."

Back in the studio, the first moment of crisis had been reached. As luck would have it, a short corner for Great Britain coincided with the sports news on Radio 5 Live.

Jones, one of the station's most polished performers, had to keep up commentary while listening for the cue for his report, then introduce his summary of the early moments of the game into commentary without interruption. He did so seamlessly — "you join us five

minutes into the game and Great Britain ... — and listeners to 5 Live caught a perfect account of the short corner (missed) into the bargain.

"That's the sort of thing we're looking at," Runcie said. "How the commentary fits in to existing coverage. How much you can get out of one commentator. Can he manage commentary and reports? At the moment, we're just expanding our existing coverage. But it's a cinderella sports like hockey which stand to benefit from DAB as well as football. There is no way we could justify 70 minutes of hockey commentary at present. In future, we will have the space."

For the record, a late goal brought Britain a 2-2 draw with Holland. And I heard it first.

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TENNIS
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WEEKEND

THE TIMES SATURDAY JANUARY 27 1996

THIS HOUSE AND CAR COST NOTHING TO RUN



It is the end of a crisp January day. The setting sun is about to give up trying to hold back the forecast frost. Though masked by a cataract of drifting cloud, it is still strong enough to penetrate the west-facing window of 26 Blandford Avenue, Oxford. It is totally appropriate, and not in the least coincidental, that the dying rays have turned the window's stained glass image of the Sun God into a golden illumination.

The Sun God is smiling, and so is Susan Roaf as she turns the key in her north-facing front door. While she has been at work, her house and the sun have been busy making

money. Dr Roaf is the owner and, to a large extent, designer and architect of Britain's most advanced eco-house.

From the front, it looks like any ordinary suburban home, squeezed between other ordinary suburban homes, with just enough space either side to allow estate agents to praise them as detached and v. desirable. At the back of No 26 there is a south-facing roof tiled entirely with solar panels generating enough power to keep Dr Roaf's energy-efficient home warm, cook her meals, do her washing, provide hot water, drive her car — and sell power to Southern Electricity. The

By Jack Crossley

conventional homes in Blandford Avenue can face electricity bills of more than £1,000 a year. Dr Roaf's last quarterly bill was for £10.50 — but it came with a cheque for £30 to cover the electricity she had exported to the National Grid. Even last December, with the coldest weather ever recorded in Britain, Dr Roaf needed to buy in only £17.50 of electricity — and that kept the house on a steady 20°C and fuelled the car, which was in daily use.

"Everyone said this form of energy efficiency wouldn't be possible with a house in

Britain. But I was determined to challenge that, and it's working superbly," Dr Roaf says. "People forget that, even on the cloudiest days, we still get energy from indirect sunlight."

How is this achieved? Well, it helps if, like Dr Roaf, you are a lecturer in energy-efficient architecture at Oxford Brookes University, and able to infect others who can help with your own energy-efficient enthusiasm. Two years ago it was estate agents: could they find a plot of land suitable for a six-bedroom, three-bathroom house with a south-facing back roof? Not easy when a further requirement was that it must be in the heavily built-

up area inside the Oxford Ring Road. The next task was to identify and locate the world's most energy-efficient equipment and materials: kitchen equipment from Britain and Germany, triple-glazed windows from Norway, 150mm-thick concrete blocks from Gloucestershire, nylon wall ties from Denmark, Corsican and Scots pine from Sherwood Forest and Scandinavian redwood pine and North American hemlock. The house also has a hand-built, wood-burning *kakelovn* ceramic stove from Sweden, a

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CHOICE

Planning to see a show or a film, an exhibition or a concert? *The Times* critics select the best entertainment

THEATRE

Benedict Nightingale

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Read Wilde's play, and you might conclude it is a melodrama with epigrams artificially inserted in the creakier gaps. But Peter Hall's production is a major piece of dramatic reclamation. With Anna Carteret, David Yelland, Penny Downie and (especially) a Wilde-looking Martin Shaw seamlessly in control, there is humanity, humour and timely truth in the tale of the rising politician threatened both by the appearance of the indiscreet letter he wrote in his youth and by his wife's unforgiving morality. Theatre Royal, Haymarket, London SW1 (0171-900 8800). Evenings: Mon to Sat, 7.45pm; matinees: Wed and Sat, 3pm. \star

AN INSPECTOR CALLS Why has a revival of a neatly carpentered thriller written 50 years ago and earnestly preaching socialism won almost every award in London, as well as several in New York? Why bother at all with J.B. Priestley's tale of a respectable family's destruction of an innocent girl? Because Stephen Daldry's superbly imaginative direction and Ian MacNeil's wonderfully evocative set transform it into a grand, gripping denunciation of the 20th-century's deadliest sins.

Garrick, Charing Cross Road, London WC2 (0171-494 5025). Evenings: Mon to Fri, 7.45pm, Sat, 8.15pm; matinees: Wed, 2.30pm, Sat, 5pm.

JAZZ

Clive Davis

JACKY TERRASSON His eponymous *Blue Note* debut found a place in many of the shortlists as the critics looked back on the outstanding records of 1995. A pukish virtuoso of Franco-American origin, he has the potential to become the most versatile and accomplished pianist since the controversial Keith Jarrett. Muscular yet poetic, he can slip into a funky backbeat on *I Love Paris*, sprinkle Debussy-esque harmonies on *Hommage à Lili Boulanger* and leap into quicksilver Bud Powell mode at a moment's notice. Jazz Café, Parkway, London NW1 (0171-344 0044), Thur Feb 1, 9pm.

BARBARA COOK/STEVE ROSS Barbara Cook's waltz through Broadway and Tim Pan Alley history is currently one of London's best kept secrets. Do not miss her final week. Wally Harper's piano arrangements are as sumptuous as a full orchestra's, and Cook's subtle vocals lift even the more obscure numbers firmly into the major league. A favourite at the Algonquin and other Manhattan salons, the Cole Porter devotee Steve Ross comes to town with another bulging sack of vintage songs. He will be followed on-stage, later in the evening, by Patricia Hodge and Sheridan Morley, presenting their tribute to Gertrude Lawrence and Jack Buchanan.

Cook Café Royal, Regent St, London W1 (0171-437 9090), tonight. Tues to Sat, 3, 9.15pm.

Ross Pizza on the Park, Knightsbridge, London SW1 (0171-235 5273). Mon 29 to Sat, 24 Feb, 9.15pm; (Hodge and Morley, 11.15pm).

Humanity and humour: Penny Downie, Dulcie Gray and Anna Carteret star in Peter Hall's timely production of Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*

of cast, but the unplanned revival of Saint-Saëns's grand biblical opera is all gain: Sidney Nolan's sumptuously colourful decor, Eliah Moshinsky's grown-up production and David Bintley's rather saucy Bacchanales – not to mention "Softly awakes my heart" – all add up to a thumping good evening out. The Greek mezzo Markella Hatzianni sings the temptress, José Cura is the prophet, and the expert Jacques Delacôte conducts. Royal Opera House, Bow St, London WC2 (0171-304 4000), Tues 30, Fri 2, 7.30pm. \star

THE MAGIC FLUTE There are few more uplifting experiences than a really good performance of Mozart's fairy-tale morality, and the English National Opera finds a strong team for the latest revival of Nicholas Hymer's fine staging. Alexander Sander's stylish conducting is the perfect springboard for exceptional singing from Janice Watson and Ian Bostridge as the very juvenile leads. Peter Snipp as the birdcatcher and John Connell as – in George Bernard Shaw's words – the voice of God. All this, and you can hear the words too. Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (0171-632 8300). Wed 31, Fri 2, 7.30pm. \star

ROCK

David Sinclair

FRANK BLACK Joining up the musical dots from Nirvana to Green Day, yet still wildly different to both, Frank Black is here to promote *The Cult of Ray*, his third solo album since the demise of the Pixies. A performer of wit and substance, Black remains one of the perennial heavy hitters of American rock. SFX, Dublin (00353 284 1747), Jan 19.



A chorus of approval: grand-stander Melissa Etheridge

MELODIA ET OSBORNE In her element singing old Janis Joplin songs at the Woodstock Festival of 1994, Melissa Etheridge has revived the grand-standing style of the traditional female rock 'n' roll star. Lionised for her own songwriting by Bruce Springsteen and Randy Newman, she dishes out big, strong themes and sweeping choruses, splashed with primary emotional colours. Her current album, *Your Little Secret*, has been somewhat eclipsed by a new wave of solo American stars which includes support act

Joan Osborne, who has been nominated for five awards at the forthcoming Grammys. Shepherds Bush Empire, London W12 (0181-740 7474), Jan 30.

DANCE

John Percival

SPRING COLLECTION A chance to catch up with what is happening in British contemporary dance: the Place Theatre and the South Bank Centre combine to offer no fewer than 25 choreographers across three intensive days. There are established creators such as Jonathan Burrows and Siobhan Davies alongside young hopefuls including Mark Bruce. The scheduling allows time to take in all six programmes for a unique cross-section of dance activity.

The Place Theatre, Duke's Road, London WC1 (0171-387 0031), Fri 2, 8pm, Sat 3, 1pm, Sun 4, 11am; Purcell Room, Sat 3, 3.30pm, and Queen Elizabeth Hall, Sat 3, 7.45pm, Sun 4, 3pm, South Bank Centre, London SE1 (0171-960 4242).

SWAN DANCE 96 A two-month season of seven dance companies opens in High Wycombe with the premiere of *Crime Fiction* by Art Dance Company (Fri 2 and Sat 3). Coming in February are Adzido (Wed 7), Aletta Collins (Wed 14), and the black company Racheal in *Captured* (Fri 29) and *The Hot Shoe Shuffle* (Mon 26 to March 2). Then in March the Royal Ballet Dance Bites tour brings four more premieres (March 19 and 19) and the series climaxes with Matthew Bourne's *Swan Lake* (March 26-30). Wycombe Swan, High Wycombe (01942 8000). 8pm; matinees: Feb 28, March 2 and 30, 2.30pm, March 19 and 27, 2pm. \star

CLASSICAL

Richard Morrison

PARIS DOUBLE The Orchestre de Paris comes to the Barbican in the "Great Orchestras of the World" series, which perhaps flattens its status: over the years it has shown us its good points but also its sloppy side. Let's hope for the former as Semyon Bychkov, its youngish and personable music director, steers it through Mahler's

unmistakably Nyman's own. It usually helps if you have seen whichever of Peter Greenaway's films they originally accompanied. That will probably be the case here: the first British performance of Nyman's *Noises Sounds & Sweet Airs*. It is an opera based on music for *Private's Books*, Greenaway's free fantasy on Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. Singers Catherine Bott, Hilary Summers and Christopher Gillett join the concrete-blasting Michael Nyman Band.

Festival Hall, South Bank, London SE1 (0171-960 4242), Tues, 8pm. \star

FILMS

Geoff Brown

THE FLOWER OF MY SECRET (15) Has Pedro Almodóvar finally grown up? It seems so: Spain's most exportable director has made a film of muted design and sober feelings, with kinks just around the edges. Heroine Marisa Paredes is enduring a mid-life crisis over her work (she writes romantic trash) and her marriage to a Nato peacemaker. This could be a recipe for caricature and farce, but Almodóvar treats the heroine's pain with touching seriousness. Curzon Mayfair (0171-369 1720); Gate (0171-837 8402); Ritzy (0171-737 2121); Screen on the Hill (0171-435 3366).

HEAT (15) "They're good." Al Pacino's workaholic detective muses, observing the work of Robert De Niro's criminals, who are robbing their way round Los Angeles. And so is the film, nearly three hours long but with few wasted minutes. The stars alone command attention: Pacino as a tightly-coiled spring, De Niro rigorously controlled as a dedicated criminal. Michael Mann builds

Maxim Vengerov, violin, plays Mendelssohn at the Barbican

Resurrection Symphony (Thursdays), and a programme of Gilbert Amy (a British premiere), Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto with Maxim Vengerov as soloist, and *The Rite of Spring* (Fridays).

Barbican, Silk Street, London EC2 (0171-638 8891). Thur Feb 1, Fri 2, 7.30pm. \star

NYMAN'S BACK Half the musical world detests Michael Nyman's pieces: the other half loves them. They are loud, repetitive, mostly derivative and unsable – but they create a sound world that is

tension, cutting between cat and mouse. Mobile camerawork and lighting create a Los Angeles of lonely souls, and several action sequences set new standards. Clapham Picture House (0171-498 3323); MGM's Fulham Road (0171-370 2636); Trocadero (0171-434 0031); Ritzy (0171-737 2121); Screen on the Green (0171-226 3520); UCI Whiteley (0171-792 3323); Warner (0171-437 4343).

GALLERIES

Richard Cork

SUSAN HILLER In a retrospective at the Tate Gallery Liverpool, Hill reveals the continuity of her interests over the past 20 years. But the means she adopts never ceases to change. In a work called *Monument*, she brings together the plaques memorialising people who died trying to save relatives or strangers. But the most arresting exhibits employ video with beguiling immediacy. While flames flicker on the wall, a child describes Rembrandt's painting of *Belshazzar's Feast*. Then attention turns to claims, by television viewers, that apparitions appear on their screens. The flames grow larger, inviting us to discover hallucinations in their writhing forms. Tate Gallery, Albert Dock, Liverpool (0151-709 3223), until March 17.

JANA STERBAK Last year, the Canadian-based Czech artist stirred controversy by exhibiting a dress made of fast-withering slices of flank steak. In a larger show at the Serpentine Gallery, only one exhibit seeks to shock. Called *Seduction Couch*, it is made of perforated steel and gives anyone rash enough to touch it an electrostatic sting. In a gruelling video work called *Condition*, Sterbak films a man burdened by a wire-mesh object on wheels. He drags the appendage round a deserted airport, and only casts it aside at the end. Maybe we can draw some comfort from this small victory. Serpentine Gallery, Kensington Gardens, London SW7 (0171-723 9072), Feb 25. \star

MUSEUMS

John Russell Taylor

PAUL SMITH TRUE BRIT Paul Smith is one of the most successful British designers of menswear, and has been chosen as the subject of the Design Museum's first major exhibition devoted to a single fashion designer. For him true Britishness has more to do with the traditional eccentricity of the British than with sportiness and understated casual elegance. The show includes a collection of videos of Smith's principal fashion shows. Design Museum, Butler's Wharf, Shad Thames, London SE1 (0171-403 6933), Mon-Fri, 11.30am-6pm; Sat-Sun, noon-6pm, until April 10.

JOHN DOWNTON Was the Modern British painter John Downton (1906-1991), this touring exhibition asks challengingly, an "archaic misfit" or an "enigmatic genius"? There is, presumably, no reason why he should not have been both. He believed passionately that art had been on the wrong road ever since the early Renaissance, and set about putting it back on track by writing texts, such as *The Death of Art*, and by painting modern portraits in his own meticulously finished manner. Occasionally, in his taste for plump young women, he suggests Boticelli, but in the man he resembles no one, his cool, almost frigid surface containing, if only just, a volcanic force of emotion.

Graves Art Gallery, Surrey Street, Sheffield (0114-273 4780). Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm; Sun, 2-5pm, until Feb 24.

PICTURE

Fulham Road (0171-370 2636); Haymarket (0171-939 1527); Swiss Cottage (0171-737 2233); Corcoran (0171-370 2636); Phoenix (0181-883 2233); Riley (0171-737 2121); Screen/Baker (0171-935 2772); Warner (0171-437 0343).

THE INDIAN IN THE CUPBOARD (PG) A toy Indian figure comes alive and begins to grow. It is the creation of Lynne Reid Banks's children's stories, directed by Frank Oz. *AGM Cinema* (0171-352 0069); Curzon Mayfair (0171-369 1720); Gate (0171-837 8402); Ritzy (0171-737 2121); Screen on the Hill (0171-435 3366).

MUTE WITNESS (15) Male girl witnesses a film studio murder. Extravagant and cheesy thriller set in Moscow, with Marina Sudina, Director, *Curzon Picture House* (0171-498 3322); Richmond (0181-332 0030); Warner (0171-437 0343).

SEVEN (18) Unsettling and off-beat sex and thrillers, with superbly written and directed by David Fincher. *MGM's Chelsea* (0171-352 5061); Fulham Road (0171-370 2636); Trocadero (0171-434 0031); Screen/Baker (0171-935 2772); Warner (0171-437 0343); *Whiteley* (0171-792 3323).

DEVIL IN A BLUE DRESS (15) Splendidly atmospheric thriller with Dennis Washington as the ordinary Joe in late 1940s Los Angeles stumbling over corporate corruption and a cold-blooded plot, from *Carl Franklin*, director, *From Dusk Till Dawn*, from *Water Monopoly*'s novel. *Curzon West End* (0171-369 1722); *Picturehouse* (0171-351 3742).

PAIR GAME (15) laughable action vehicle for model Clark Gable, cast as an ornery vet with William Baldwin, Director, *Andrew Sipes*. *MGM's Chelsea* (0171-352 0031); *Screen/Baker* (0171-935 2772); *Whiteley* (0171-792 3323); Warner (0171-437 0343).

LEAVING LAS VEGAS (18) Nicely opulent gangster saga from Chinese director Zhang Yimou, with Gong Li. *Curzon Picture House* (0171-498 4470); *Waterloo* (0171-498 1170).

SHOWBOAT (18) Las Vegas stripper finds success is not everything. Hollow tale of hollow people, bravely presented by director Paul Verhoeven. *Odeon West End* (01425 815724).

TO DIE FOR (15) Delicious social satire, with a great performance from Madonna, cast as a mordant, witty, and mordant host for play. *Van Sant* directs *Nicole Kidman* and *Matt Dillon*. *MGM Piccadilly* (0171-357 3561); *Odeon Mazzanine* (01426 815683).

THE UNDERNEATH (15) The classic 1940s thriller *Crime* remade as a stylish puzzle by director Steven Soderbergh. *Galaxy* (0171-437 1234).

Marisa Paredes stars in *The Flower of My Secret*

Picture (0171-468 3322); MGM's Chelsea (0171-352 5061); Haymarket (0171-939 1527); Swiss Cottage (0171-737 2233); Corcoran (0171-370 2636); Phoenix (0181-883 2233); Riley (0171-737 2121); Screen/Baker (0171-935 2772); Warner (0171-437 0343).

Leaving Las Vegas (18); Nicolas Cage, Director, with a sense of humour; with Sean Penn, Director, Martin Campbell

Marisa Paredes stars in *The Flower of My Secret*

PRIVATE (15) Story plays on the theme of a woman who falls in love with her son. *Stephen Poliakoff*, Director. *Curzon Picture House* (0171-901 8878). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat. Sat, 2.30pm.

THE SHAKESPEARE REVUE A witty evening of song, dance and sketches to do with William Shakespeare by *Christopher Luscombe* and *Mark McAvoy*. *James Bolam*, Director. *Compton Crook*, Crook (0191-858 9555). Tues 28, 8pm; Wed 29, 7.30pm; Sat, 30, 7pm.

THE TOWER (15) New play by *Tony Kavanagh*, and the first production by *David Troughton* in the title role of the much-loved but lecherous and usually skulking *Charles I*. *Royal Court*, Sloane Square, SW1 (0171-924 0055). Tues 28, 8pm; Wed 29, 7.30pm; Thurs 30, 7pm.

THE GOLDTHWAITE ROAD Enjoyable new *Sam Shepard* comedy. *James Bolam* in lead, though certainly on the sexual map as a wayward coach-driver, now facing his end hot from

THE LOST (15) *Stephen Poliakoff* directs *Tim Pigott-Smith* as a Salvadorean who has been sent to the USA to find his son. *Curzon Picture House* (0171-901 8878). Tues 28, 8pm; Wed 29, 7.30pm; Sat

INSIDE STORY

Continued from page 1
 British Yorkpark gas-condensing boiler, and an Italian electric car nicknamed Hannibal after being driven over the Alps to win the European Solar Car of the Year award.

How it all works is explained at length, and in numbing techno-jargon, in learned journals (photovoltaic cells, solar thermal panels, photons colliding with electrons in silicon panels, glass-filled thermo-plastic polyester wall ties).

Far better is to listen to Dr Roaf, aged 42 and mother of ten-year-old Christopher and nine-year-old Richard. She is an eager guide to her £200,000 house of the future, which is constantly being invaded by architects, students, technical journalists and scientists interested in solar technology.

Had the house been built conventionally, she says, it would have cost about £160,000. The extra £40,000 covered the cost of the solar roof (about £25,000) and all the energy-saving equipment and materials. The walls, floors, roof and ceilings are super-insulated so that not only sunlight but cooking heat, and even body warmth, are retained within the house.

Sophisticated equipment monitors the heat generated and heat used, but Dr Roaf avoids becoming a high-tech energy bore and takes impish delight in revealing her low-tech method of checking the sitting room temperature — a comic Christmas card which has Santa studying a stick-on strip thermometer.

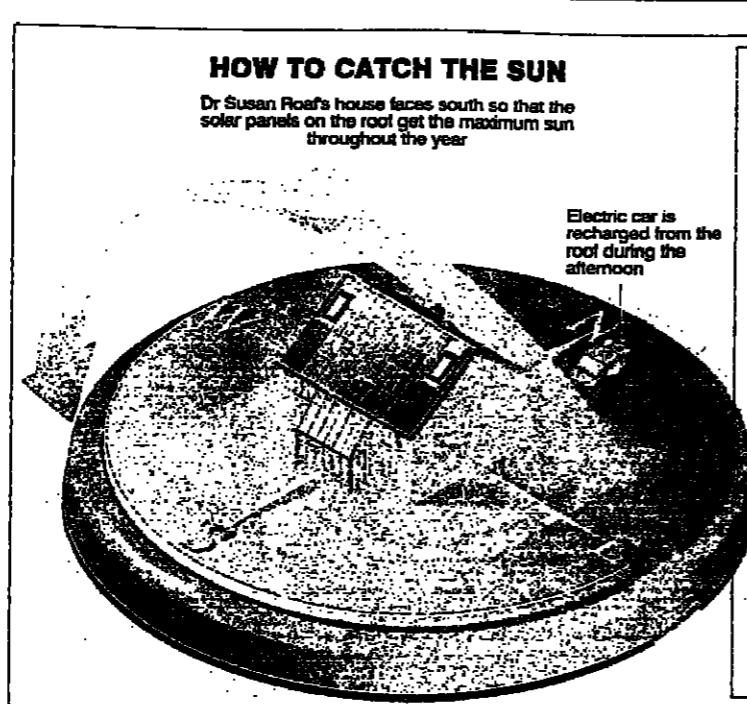
"Look," she says, "it's 21C on a winter's afternoon and there's no heating on anywhere in the house. Not bad, eh? Light some candles for a dinner party and the temperature goes up."

You might think that when a bunch of sustainable-energy enthusiasts get together to design clinically a totally heat-efficient building you could end up with a clinically heat-efficient building, and not much else. Not very likely when Dr Roaf is on site, and remembering that she is going to live there with two young sons, one of them asthmatic.

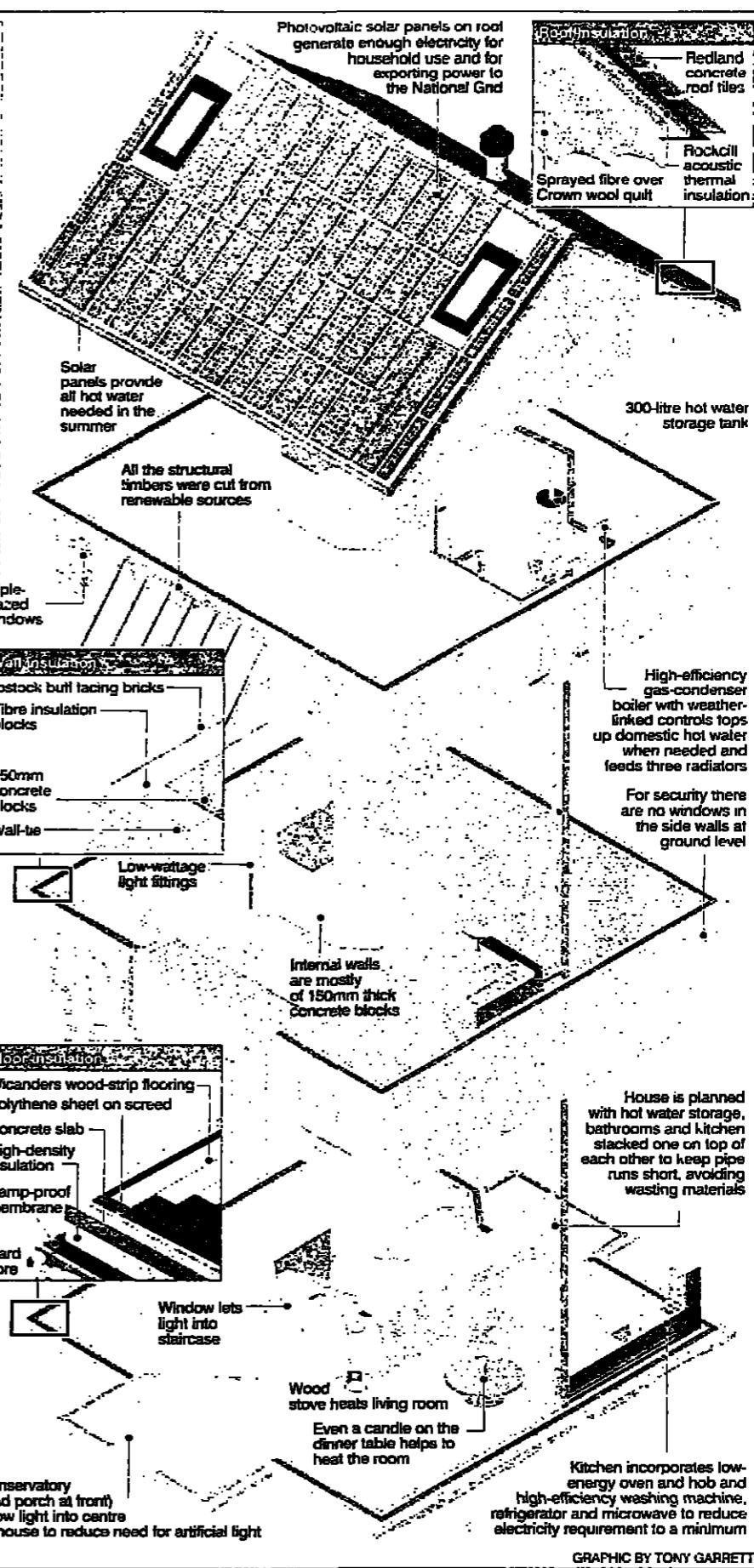
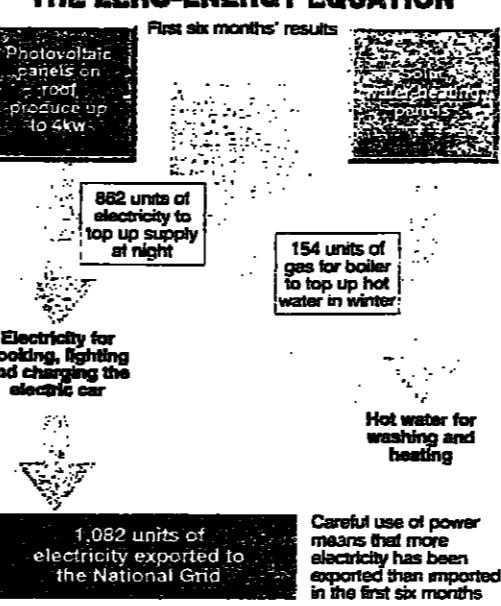
The internal finishings of the house were dictated by a desire to keep everything simple, she says. The place had to provide a healthy environment but that didn't mean sacrificing comfort and livability. Uncarpeted timber and cork floors retain warmth and keep down house dust and mites. The walls are simply painted in white, water-based paint, which is easy to clean.

The simplicity of all this made it easy to co-ordinate the rest of the furnishings. Old, solid furniture throughout, comfortable family stuff.

The house is designed not only to keep warm but never to get too hot. The thick walls and the huge amount of concrete in the building soak up heat trapped in the sealed environment. The sources of this heat are the sun, the wood stove, the gas-condensing boiler, the cooking oven and people. The heat from this thermal mass is slowly released back into the house. Dr Roaf says, so that the temperature cruises between 20C and 25C even in the hottest weather. The walls will stay around those temperatures even if it is 30C outside. It has



THE ZERO-ENERGY EQUATION



□ Dr Roaf's system was designed by solar power specialists Alan Dichter, of MJP Associates, Haddenham, Buckinghamshire, and Bruce Cross, of the Energy Equipment Testing Service at Cardiff University. Solar hot water panels from AES at Findhorn. The house was built by Paul Trimby and colleagues from the Centre for Alternative Technology at Machynlleth, Powys SY20 9AZ (01654 702400). They also helped design the roofing system.

□ There are 40,000 homes in Britain with solar systems for heating domestic water, and the number is increasing. Such systems (costing about £2,000 to £4,000) simply use the heat of the sun to warm the water running through ranks of narrow pipes. Dr Roaf uses a different technology: photovoltaics. Photons from the sun collide with electrons in her silicon panels. Their only escape route is along wires

in the roof. The 48 photovoltaic panels, with a capacity to generate a 4kW peak of electricity, cost £10,000 each from BP Solar, Chiswick Road, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middlesex TW16 7LN (0932 775453). □ Ground-floor insulation: 160mm of Crown floor slab, with 50mm concrete on damp-proof membrane over insulation.

□ Roof insulation: Crown wool quilt and American sprayed fibre-blown insulation between 200mm deep rafters, with 50mm Rockfill acoustic thermal insulation.

□ About 95 per cent of the internal walls are high-density concrete block. The ground and first floors are concrete and the second floor is timber, with mineral fibre between the beams.

electricity from the roof panels to AC for use in the house, and the Yorkpark gas-condensing boiler system. The boiler is controlled by a small computer linked to the outside air temperature, and has a databank showing how much power has been generated since the family moved into the house last April.

"Look, it's 4.30pm on a January evening and the inverter shows 250W are being generated. Earlier in the day, when the sun was out, we were getting 2,500W."

We climb the central staircase, skilfully windowed to avoid needing artificial light in the daytime and needing only three 9W bulbs at night. We enter the loft and Dr Roaf says: "Here's my box of tricks." We are surrounded by electronic gadgetry which is monitoring the life of the house like a patient under intensive care. This includes a solar inverter turning DC

electricity from the roof panels to AC for use in the house, and the extra power needed is triggered automatically from the National Grid at 7.1p a unit. "So we have to be methodical," Dr Roaf says. "Use the equipment in sequence: do the laundry in the morning, charge the car in the afternoon.

"This way I hardly ever need to import power from Southern Electricity. Most of the time I am exporting to them — at 2.8p a unit. Over the year we will export more than import. That's about 1,000 exported kWhs a year."

Her three-seater Kewet Eljet electric car, capable of 40mph, takes two hours to charge and will then cover 30-35 miles. Dr Roaf has asked Oxford council to install electric points around the city where drivers of electric cars can plug in for a recharge. "But Dr Roaf," they say, "you are the only one with such a car." Not for long if Dr Roaf has her way.

The house and car may save her money, but the long-term aim is to save the world. The whole concept will be very useful for teaching future architects about using alternative energy. "I want to see homes like mine becoming widespread, with the technology to build them becoming cheaper," she says.

Apart from saving money, there is the satisfaction of knowing that the power I use is not the product of any polluting process. "I've been teaching energy-efficient architecture at Brookes for five years and I am very aware that we need to learn fast, because the world's energy problems are huge."

"How long do we have? Something like eight years" known UK gas reserves are

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Dr Roaf's solar-assisted battery car can travel at 40mph

Ruth Gledhill attends a carol service to celebrate the season of Epiphany

Execution of faith at the Tower



THE SIGN marked "Instruments of Torture" did little to dispel the windchill from the Thames that made me shiver as I walked under Tower Bridge, over a rattling drawbridge and into the small, Tudor building beside the moat of the Tower of London. Probably because of its location, St Peter Ad Vincula seems a fairly grim chapel, eerie when deserted on a gloomy winter's day. *Ad vincula* means "in chains" and a handful of other churches in England and Wales are so named, commemorating St Peter's imprisonment in Jerusalem.

We were met at the west door by the chaplain, Canon Gerry Murphy, and the Archbishop of Canterbury. Dr George Carey, who was that day's preacher and who seemed thoughtful. He later confessed that he was mindful of William Laud, the only other Bishop of Bath and Wells other than himself ever to go to Canterbury, and who was executed at the Tower in 1645, after repudiating the accusation of Popery.

We were there for a rare event in the Church of England, a carol service to celebrate not Christmas but Epiphany, the season which begins 12 days after Christmas and celebrates the coming of the Magi. Epiphany, which ends next Friday with the presentation of Christ in the Temple, has at times been

neglected, but has attained more notice of late because it was the season chosen by all denominations to launch the Decade of Evangelism five years ago.

The service was in support of the Shafesbury Society, a leading Christian social welfare charity.

After the procession the Archbishop came to rest near the stone which commemorates Lady Jane Grey, proclaimed Queen when Edward died in 1553 but executed within a year after Mary ascended the throne. Nearby lie the bodies of Anne Boleyn, Catherine

Howard, the two saints John Fisher and Thomas More, and many others.

Lord Macaulay, in his 1848 *History of England*, described the chapel as the saddest spot on earth. "Death is associated there, not as in Westminster and St Paul's, with genius and virtue, with public veneration and with imperishable renown . . . but with whatever is darkest in human nature and in human destiny." But this does not do the chapel justice. As the Shafesbury Society gives hope to the hopeless, so this chapel and its inspiring chaplain, through their living witness to those unjustly condemned who are buried there, give faith to those without faith.

I was still brooding on the price of fame, power, or of simply being in the wrong place at the wrong time, when the first lesson, from Genesis I began. "The spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," read the altar server.

"God said, let there be light." At that point the clouds parted outside and shafts of sunlight streamed through the windows. I noticed that the church was crowded, and all present seemed cheerful. Hymns were sung with enthusiasm, and Dr Carey was listened to intently.

A few clouds returned at the end. It was helpful to be reminded as I left that St Peter had a miraculous escape from his Jerusalem prison.

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Howard, the two saints John Fisher and Thomas More, and many others.

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GARDEN ANSWERS

Q I brought back custard apple pits from Madeira and now have a young plant in a pot. I do not have a window ledge free of central heating, and wonder how to give it humidity and warmth. I have tried placing a perforated plastic bag over it to create a moist atmosphere. — Mrs J. Shoucar, Chishurst, Kent.

A The name custard apple is used to describe several species of the genus *Annona*. The commonest is the cherimoya, *Annona cherimola*. You can grow this small tree in a pot, but fruit production is tricky without a warm greenhouse. The cortical fruits take many months to develop and need pollinating by hand. *A. cherimola* is the hardest species and does not require tropical air moisture levels. On the other hand, it will hate the dryness of central heating. Try standing the pot on a tray of moist gravel, and attach a mossy pole to the trunk. Do not use a plastic bag covering, because this may cause moulds.

Q In my garden I have what I take to be 'Himalaya Giant' blackberries, which are rampant. The plants make far more new growth than I have space to fit in. Does the new growth contribute nutrients to the crop on the old growth, and how should I train the stems? — J.R. Pope, Tisbury, Wiltshire.

A 'Himalaya Giant' is certainly rampant. It thinks nothing of making shoots 20ft long in a season. Varieties as vigorous as this are best trained not in a fan but to the opposite side of the plant each year, to save the worst disentangling of old from new. Cut off the old canes as soon as they have fruited. Weave the new ones up and down on your wires, in a sideways S-pattern, and try not to stop the ends until as late as possible, as this induces sideshoots. You could replace it with a smaller, more manageable variety, such as 'Waldo'. These are thornless varieties such as 'Black Satin' and 'Thorn-free', but the flavour is not as

STEPHEN ANDERTON
TALKS TO READERS' LETTERS

good. 'Loch Ness' is, perhaps, the best thornless variety for flavour, and sufficiently restrained in its growth to be fan trained.

Q My patio of reconstructed stone became dark and slimy in wet weather and requires soapy water and hard brushing. I do not want to face that job every year. What is the cure, and should the slabs be sealed in some way? — B. Lewis, Bicester, Oxford.

A I would hesitate to seal the paving, because the sealant would soon wear off in areas of heavy use. A peeling surface might look worst of all. Paving in shade is always more prone to algae growth, so make the most of the sunlight first. Check, too, that rain runs off the surface adequately. The household cleanser Flash, applied regularly with a stiff yard brush, keeps algae reasonably at bay, but to kill it properly you would need to use a proprietary product, such as Armillitox, which is safe to use where turf adjoins. There are stronger masonry biocides, which last longer (a season, if you are lucky) but they are less environmentally friendly. Seek further help from a builder's merchant.

Q Can I grow a mulberry tree as a shrub in a tub on my balcony? — P.C. Dartmouth, Devon.

A The mulberry is a tough tree and can stand plenty of cold, so that should not be a problem. Be sure the tub is well drained, so it does not freeze in a waterlogged state. You will need to prune it back a little every year to keep it in bounds, and to repeat it every year (or two), trimming back the longest roots, teasing off

some of the old compost, and reporting in fresh compost. Tough or not, it pays to protect the tub in winter with bubble film and sacking.

Q Last year I raised four kiwi fruit plants from seed and brought them on in the greenhouse where they have grown very energetically. How do I continue to grow them, as I can find no literature on them? — K.W. Beer, Cardiff.

A The kiwi fruit, or Chinese gooseberry (*Acanthocia chinensis*), is a rampant climber. You could grow it out of doors as an ornamental for its large, furry leaves, but for fruiting it needs to be under glass, with a vigorous pruning system similar to that used for grape vines. They can just about be grown in a large pot. If you want good fruit, it is advisable to buy a reliable named variety. For further information, consult the relevant extract from the Royal Horticultural Society's *Encyclopaedia of Fruits* (ISBN 1-85732-905-8, £7.99).

Q Why do my outdoor tomatoes split? I have them in grow-bags and watered them every evening through last summer's hot weather. Then they split when the rain came. — G. Stoney, Itchen Abbas, Hampshire.

A Hot and dry conditions, followed by heavy watering, leads to a sudden influx of water which bursts the fruit. For all your care with the watering, the sudden arrival, after prolonged heat, of abundant moisture in the air as well as the soil will cause plants to drink deeply and pop their buttons. If splitting occurs even during hot weather, try watering morning and evening, with fewer plants to a bag.

● Readers wishing to have their gardening problems answered should write to: Garden Answers, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington St, London E1 9XN. We regret that few personal answers can be given and that it may not be possible to deal with every request. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. The Times also regrets that enclosures accompanying letters cannot be returned.

Stephen Anderton on the wisdom of using trees for climbing plants, such as wisteria, ivy and roses

There is nothing so strong as a tree to support a rampant climber. In Cadogan Place, Knightsbridge, west London, a wisteria once grew 60ft up into the head of a tree of Heaven, until the 1987 storm brought the tree down. But gardeners always worry about what damage a climber, particularly ivy, can do to a tree. The usual answer is: less than you think.

One of my strongest memories while visiting gardens open to the public last year was seeing a mature silver variegated holly at Long Close, Woodhouse Eaves, in Leicestershire. Into the holly were growing a free-flowering wisteria and a pale-pink form of *Clematis montana*.

The two were flowering simultaneously and, although the silver-holly foliage did not offer a striking contrast, between the three of them they made an extraordinary tower of silver, pink and mauve; colour poured off in swags and eddied into adjacent trees. The climbers, in fact, were doing considerable harm to the holly. Evergreens hate having their foliage smothered by other plants, and quickly become moth-eaten or bald. Left to their own devices, the climbers would have finished off that grand and glamorous holly in a couple of years, and I do not doubt that careful hands were at work behind the scenes keeping that tumult of growth sufficiently in check for all contributors to survive.

In Northumberland, after a recent mild winter, I saw the Scotch flame flower, *Tropaeolum speciosum*, turning a dreary Lawson cypress into a pillar of summer scarlet. Usually, the tropaeolum dies down to the ground, but that winter its stems had survived right to the top and had grown on to make a 25ft pillar of red. No doubt the cypress would survive the odd year under the less than smothering foliage of the tropaeolum, and if not, well... do we need any more Lawson cypresses?

Wisteria, Scotch flame flower, vines and Boston ivy all leapfrog up twigs on trees. But there are others which grow clinging to the trunk, to emerge later at the top. Ivy is the obvious case. Creeping stems on the ground suddenly bump noses with a trunk and up they go, fast as a cartoon cat, and clinging to the trunk with aerial roots. Then, in the safety of the branches, they turn sideways and pause. Suddenly the growth habit changes. The aerial roots stop and the stems branch out from the trunk, making mature, flowering growth. It is this

busby top growth which is the real threat to trees. Gardeners worry that the aerial roots will suck the life from the tree and strangle it but, in reality, there is little harm done. The real risk is partly from top growth robbing the tree itself of light, and from the weight of mature ivy growth, allowing so much snow to collect on branches in winter that limbs break under the weight.

The sight of mature ivy growth in a tree offends some people, who prefer to see a tree clear in its outline. But William Robinson, that 19th-century proselyte of wild gardening, planted ivy on the ground with the clear intention that it would find its way up into the trees. Perhaps not in a formal garden, but certainly in a woodland or wild garden.

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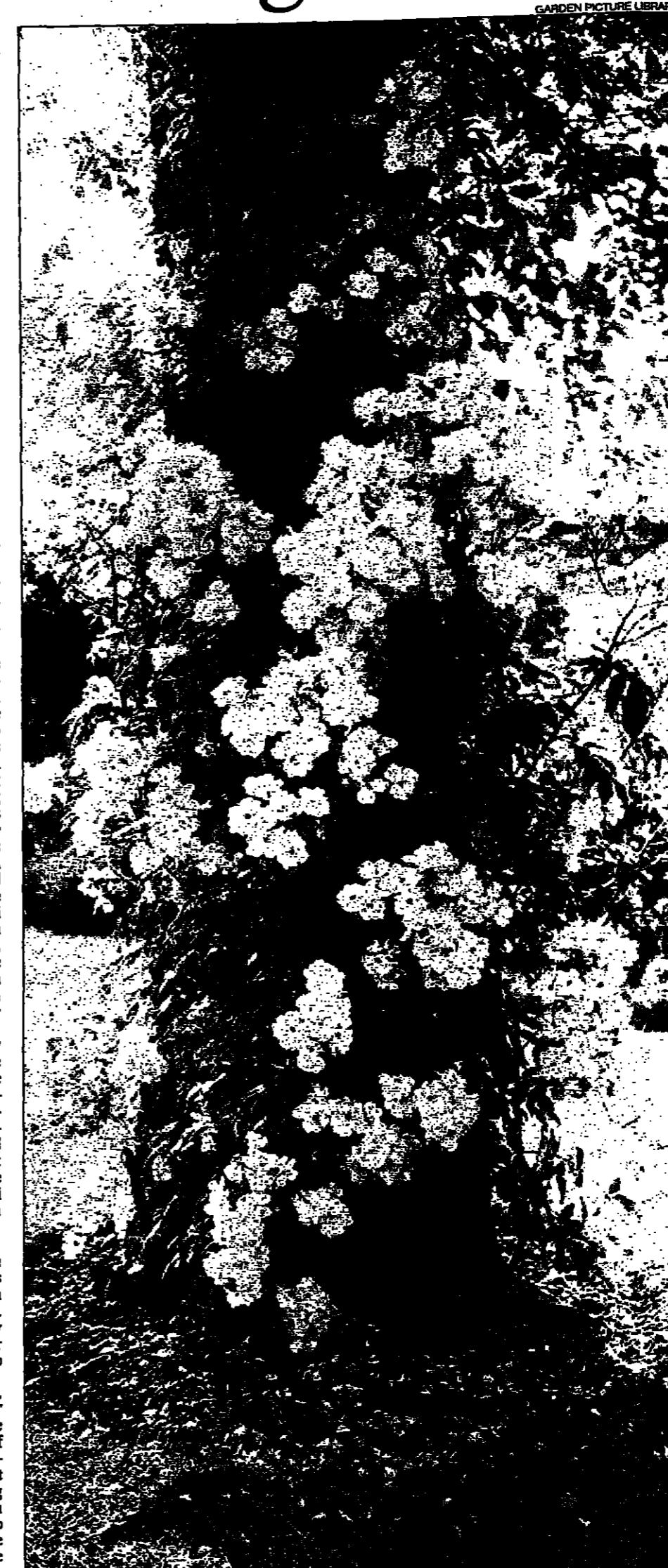
● If you have ivy in a garden tree and it does not offend, keep it in hand by pruning. Take out some growth every winter and give it to flower arrangers whom you wish to be in your debt.

And when you do prune, notice how many old birds' nests there are in the mature growth. The forking habit of the twigs, high up and evergreen, means that birds love it for nesting. If you are clearing out a great deal of ivy from an old tree, it is no bad idea to wear a mask against the cascades of dust and birdlime which are released.

Similar to holly in ivy, but deciduous, is the climbing *Hydrangea petiolaris*. It looks marvellous grown up into an old pine tree when its creamy, flat heads of flower open in June and you catch a hint of coconut scent on the air. It takes a little more starting off than ivy but, once it is established, it will luxuriate in a tree and require the same periodic cutting out of chunks of flowing growth in winter.

Slightly less rampant is *Schizophragma hydrangeoides*, which might be good to try growing in a tree, or the less hardy but evergreen *Pileostegia viburnoides*.

For autumn colour, a tree



Summer sensation: a vibrant 'Rambling Rector' rose entwining the trunk of an old pear tree

leaved Japanese vine, *Vitis coignetiae*, or Virginia creeper.

Parthenocissus quinquefolia. Either would be more fun than the Chinese gooseberry which, although it has large, fury foliage, simply goes grey in autumn.

Celastrus orbiculatus is a rampant climber with insignificant foliage and flowers, but its glory is its orange berries born after the leaves have fallen, and they can look marvellous swagging down from the lower branches of a tree. Both male and female are required for berries to be produced, so it makes sense to plant only the hermaphrodite

form in gardens, to save space and trouble.

What of climbers for smaller trees? There are roses, of course, clematis species and hybrids, honeysuckles, and the blue potato-flowered *Solanum crispum* 'Glasnevin'. But not every small tree (or large one) is improved by having a climber all over it, and in a small garden where a small tree may be a main part of the design, clarity of trunk and branches is perhaps more useful than a muddle of flowing growth in winter.

With the best will in the world, one decaying apple tree with a rose climbing up it does not a Sissinghurst make.

● **WEEKEND TIPS**

• Cut back ivy and creepers on the house-to-the roof line, and erect training wires on walls.

• Pot up or replant *Hippeastrum* in a soil-based compost, such as John Innes No 2, and keep fairly dry until growth starts.

• Remove weak or crossing growth on hybrid tea and floribunda roses, but delay final pruning.

• Sow early-crop broad beans in pots under glass ready for spring planting.

Gardens to visit

Plas Brondau, Llanfrothen, Gwynedd, 01764 770484. Off A4085, five miles northeast of Porthmadog. Open daily 9am-5pm. Entrance £1.50, children 50p.

Architectural gardens can be presented to best effect in winter, and this is true of Plas Brondau in Wales, created by the architect Sir Clough Williams-Ellis, designer of nearby Portmeirion. The house occupies a spectacular position on the edge of Snowdonia, and Williams-Ellis designed his hillside to take the most of breathtaking views. These are framed by yew hedges and topiary. Horticulture is understated, and ornamental flourishes, such as fine urns atop tall piers, some balustrading and statues, are the primary decorations. The link with the surrounding countryside is dramatically presented by a path leading from the garden through woodland to the watchtower that Williams-Ellis built on a natural crag.

● Claremont Landscape Garden, Esher, Surrey, 01784 449420. In Esher, off the A2 Portsmouth Road. Open: Jan to March, Nov and Dec (except 25th), daily except Mon, 10am-5pm (unless earlier); April to Oct, Mon to Fri, 10am-6pm, Sat and Sun, Bank Holiday Monday, 10am-7pm. Entrance £2.

This is primarily a nursery which is probably known to most gardeners for its mouth-watering stands at Chelsea and other big shows around the country. But any time during the next few weeks is ideal for a visit to look at the dwarf bulbs and other miniature plants in which it specialises. Early delights, such as anemones, reticulata irises and cyclamen are presented in unusually wide ranges. There is also a mail-order service.

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BOOKS

Damn, what a publisher

A heartfelt tribute to a man of exemplary faith and vision

A num of mine used to say that there was nothing like a quick survey of other people's husbands to reconcile one to one's own. I suspect that that is precisely how most writers feel about their publishers — an exasperation with daily habits balanced by a recognition of the very real dangers of an alternative. (In any case, in these perilous marital and publishing times, suppose nobody else wants you?)

These reflections were brought on by an oddly heartfelt occasion in the publishing world last week. I say oddly because publishing is not going in much for heart at the moment but more for an unsettling mixture of commerce (which it does not appear much good at) and confusion (at which it seems to excel).

The occasion was a farewell dinner of 250 people — publishers, agents, journalists and authors — at the Merchant Taylors' Hall for Paul Scherer, the retiring chairman and chief executive of Transworld Publishing. What made it uncommon was not the heavyweight guest list but that nobody had come merely to network or nosebag, but instead out of real admiration and affection for the guest of honour.

I ought to confess now that Scherer has been my own paperback publisher since I turned to writing contemporary fiction. More than that, he is the first publisher in a writing career of more than 20 years at whom I have been able to have a really good look, partly because of the sort of man he is and partly because he always ran a very open company.

To a writer, a publisher is a very different matter from an editor. An editor is necessarily your intimate: an editor can become your best mate with whom you feel perfectly free to quarrel shrilly about pet metaphors and unhappy endings. But a publisher, to be of service to an author, must keep his/her distance. One hopes for a friendship of course, but it should be a dignified one that recognises with mutual respect, an equally mutual business dependence. Writers, rather like Jerusalem on the *Mappa Mundi*, see



JOANNA TROLLOPE

themselves as the centre of the world: it is imperative that publishers, to make the best of those writers, should see the whole of the map.

The part of that map occupied by Transworld when Scherer joined in 1982 was, to say the least, undistinguished. It was losing £1 million a year, it had a funny name — casually bestowed by a former senior executive after the airline he happened to be travelling on at the moment of naming the baby — and a funny address, in the Uxbridge Road, which is, as Scherer liked to explain kindly to nery metropolitan journalists, "just this side of Bath".

Thirteen years later, Transworld is at the top of the publishing tree with profits of more than £7 million and a revenue increase last year of 37 per cent. (There are no plans to change either name or address.)

This is plainly the work of an excellent businessman, which Scherer is. He is also an equally excellent people manager. He has said that the first essential of a good publishing house is the authors and the second is having the right people in the right jobs. But there is more to it than that. I do not think it is irrelevant that Scherer is a practising Roman Catholic and an enthusiastic family man, since there is nothing like family and faith to prevent one from ever taking oneself too seriously. Or for helping one to realise that other people, even the most troublesome, are fellow travellers.

We shall miss him. We shall miss his principles and his unsnobishness, his humour and his capacity to be peacefully himself, whether addressing a trade conference on overheads control, or waltzing gravely, in response to a dare from the sales reps, around a dance floor in Cyprus with a tower of water (or was it whisky?) glasses on his head. But he has taught us writers so much, not least to realise that not only do we not need to know everything about the passage of our books to the shops but also that there are people who actually know better about such things as we do. And he has also taught us what to aim for in a publisher.

Interstellar yuppies blast off

■ THE REALITY DYSFUNCTION
By Peter F. Hamilton
Macmillan, £16.99

values taken to the high heavens. Terra-compatible worlds are seen as investment opportunities: free trade is the basis of interplanetary civilisation, and a few wars: there is a *Star Trek*-style confederation but also a galactic Christian kingdom: worlds are frequently colonised on an ethnic basis, giving us a Polish planet called Mazowiecki and even an isolationist English idyll: a world called Norfolk, whose main export — Norfolk Tears — is the most sought-after drink in the universe.

Hamilton divides humanity into Edenists — genetically engineered space-dwellers with telepathic affinity to their biotechnological homes and ships — and Adamists, effectively the Luddites of the future, who cling to quaint concepts such as religion.

Which brings us to the great central theme of this book — life, the universe and everything. The cast includes a Satanist ready to stir revolt on a pioneer world with living conditions like California in the 1840s, a teenage girl who has inherited an outcast tax-haven empire which also holds the archaeological key to the mysterious suicide of an ancient alien race, and a free-booting cosmic Casanova.

This is an intergalactic adventure story laced with ironies, insights and held together by a transcending central plot: absolutely vintage science fiction. Hamilton puts British sci-fi back into interstellar overdrive.

PETER MILLAR

near-future of technological neo-punk anarchy and an evolution of humanity into a body-transformed, almost Confucian society outside the laws of time and space. Britain's leading new-wave exponent of the genre, Iain M. Banks, envisaged a sort of cross between sexually relaxed Swedish social democracy and Tony Blair's "New" Labour with everyone given an unlimited credit card.

In stark contrast, Peter F. Hamilton's intergalactic society of the early 27th century is an apotheosis of Thatcherite



Hamilton: vintage sci-fi

Work, once an onerous chore, has become a desperately sought-after and jealously guarded privilege, says Harry Ritchie

get up in the morning, a sense of structure to the days and weeks, and above all, the camaraderie of workmates — these are the boons envied by the retired or unemployed in *Talking Work: An Oral History* by Trevor Blackwell & Jeremy Seabrook (Faber, £15.99).

■ TALKING WORK: An Oral History
By Trevor Blackwell & Jeremy Seabrook
Faber, £15.99

omnibus driver at the start of the century to the teenager Tricia Dun-can's account of her wiping and feeding duties in a present-day private nursing home.

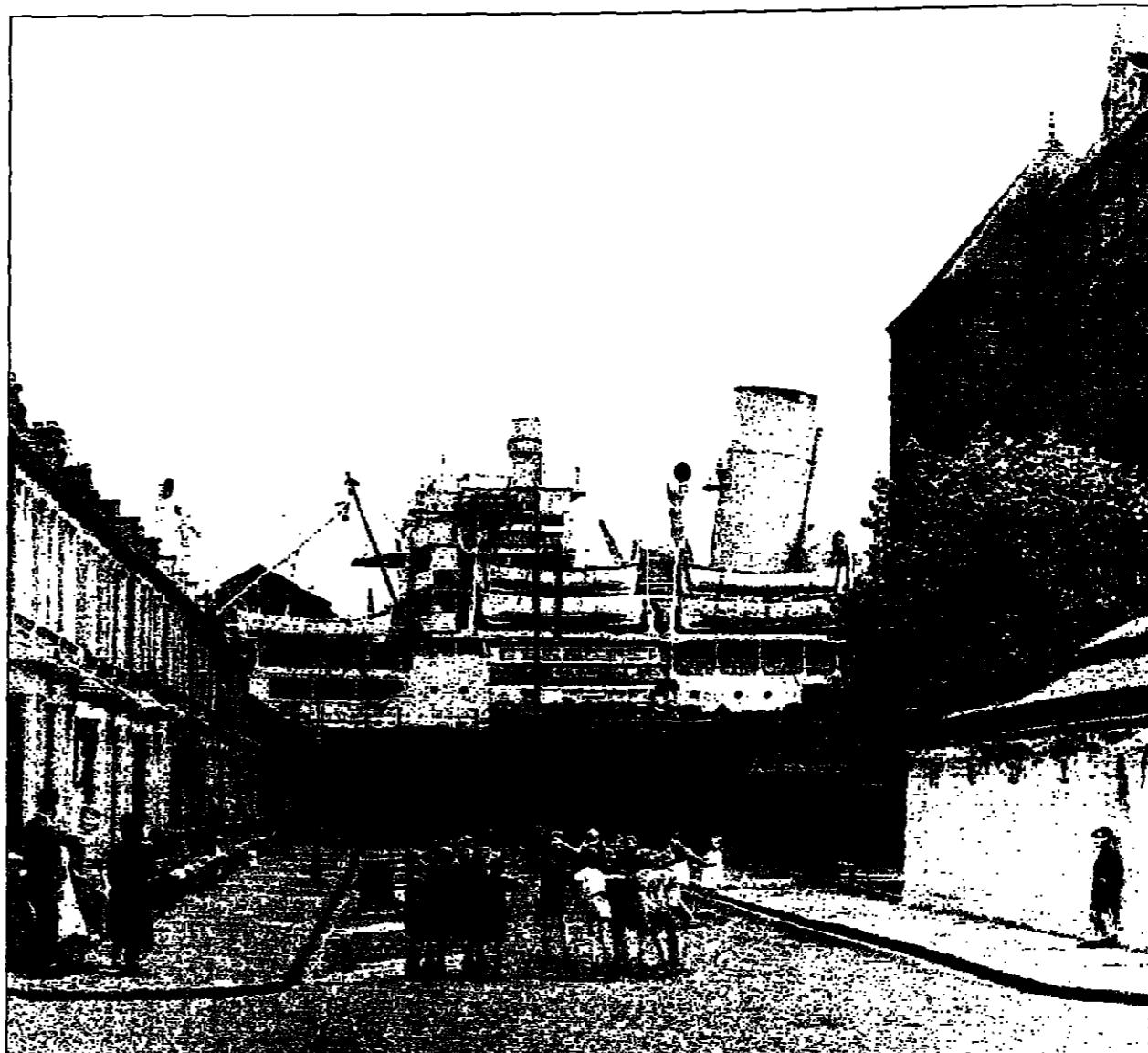
Many of the monologues provide

glimpses of amazing autobiography — that of Ada Carey, for example, born in 1902 to a life of unrelenting hardship, or of Len Greenham, who spent 46 proud years in the leather trade, where he perfected the now-lost craft of the morocco-grainer. The most arcane job was that of the young Terry Hamlyn, who started out in a Lyons Corner House in the early 1960s as a light-bulb changer.

Terry's subsequent career of duck-

ing and diving becomes more typical as the monologues move towards the present day, partly because the authors ignore any employee who might have a conventional bourgeois profession. One young interviewee does describe himself as middle-class, but since he earns a bit on the side as well as claiming his dole, perhaps he is mistaken.

This is a rather ramshackle book. It is also a partial study, since all the interviewees belong to the urban working class. Even so, it makes for fascinating reading. Were I the authors' foreman, I would slap them on the back.

All shipshape: Saville Road in London's Docklands once had a dry dock at the end of it. Now it backs onto the terminal buildings of City Airport. From *Classic Ships: Romance and Reality* by Nicholas Faith (Boxtree, £17.99)

Sarah Johnson suggests some titles to explain sex, death and French

Facts of life

CHILDREN

Mayan tale: *People of Corn*

subtly-written scene of attempted rape that younger children need only understand at their own levels. Alice and Cappy decide to set off with Two Songs to find her own people. Loveday's picture of young people trying to choose grown-up words for their feelings will be memorable. For ages nine and over.

Younger children are often more worried about death than sex, so look for Sheila and Kate Isherwood's *My Grandad* (OUP, £3.99), one of the best "situation books" I have seen, in which a child thinks of all the different ways in which her dead grandfather is still with her — a simple and useful book for under-sevens.

Two thoughtful ethnic stories are worth looking out for

gouache paintings from Carla Golembi. Jane Kurtz, who impressed last year with *Momo on the Mountain*, has written *Almaz and the Lion* (Gollancz, £8.99), another graceful Ethiopian folk-tale with a message about building relationships that should not be missed by stepchildren and step-parents all over the world.

Every posh nursery school seems to teach French these days (although German or Spanish would be more useful) so *Opal Dunn's Un Deux Trois* (Frances Lincoln, £8.99) will be popular. She has collected some charming French nursery rhymes that parents will enjoy reciting with their under-fives, or with five to eight learning French.

Some colourful fun with language for even younger children (*two to four*) is contained in *Sleep, Sleep, Sleep* (Little, Brown, £9.99), a multi-lingual lullaby by Nancy Van Laan with lovely, bright pictures by Holly Meade.

NOVELS IN BRIEF

Weird sisters

the funeral of his murdered cousin Mary. Finding the murderer will be no easy matter because Benedict's family, the Macallans — a Mafia-like clan with sinister powers — are so universally loathed that almost anyone could have done it. Brenchley writes compellingly but his narrative sometimes gets lost in Gothic special effects.

■ AN IMAGE TO DIE FOR
By Mike Phillips
HarperCollins, £14.99

SAM READ, journalist and reluctant sleuth, is black. More importantly, he belongs to the inner ring: he could win a Nobel Prize for street wisdom. His job, for a television company, is to trace a missing black layabout who might have committed the murder for which another man is in jail. Read's search uncovers deeper, scarier issues, involving the complex past lives of his television colleagues. He moves effortlessly between media-land and decaying inner London. This is Mike Phillips's best novel, brutal and caring, totally authentic.

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The magnificent gardens of Chatsworth in Derbyshire one of 16 short-listed properties.

The Times/NPI National Heritage Awards

Since the launch of the National Heritage Awards last autumn, readers of *The Times* have nominated more than 160 properties which they consider to be the best in the British Isles.

The awards, in association with pensions specialist NPI, now moves onto the voting stage and today we publish a voting form, right, containing the 16 short-listed finalists. You can also vote for *The Times* Family award, by selecting a property you consider makes a special effort to entertain and inform adults and children.

The winning property will be presented with a crystal trophy by Lord Inglesfield, under-secretary of state at the Department of National Heritage, at a gala reception in London in April. By registering your vote, you will automatically be entered into a free prize draw for the chance to attend the ceremony with a guest. Coffee table books illustrating historic buildings, worth £20 each, will go to 20 runners-up.

Post the voting form to: *The Times/NPI National Heritage Awards*, Spero Communications, Grampian House, Meridian Gate, Marsh Wall, London E14 9XT. Closing date is Saturday, March 2, 1996.



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Bolsover Castle Dover Castle

Brockworth Hall Fountains Abbey

Chatsworth

TIMES BOOKS

THURSDAY

Peter Jay analyses the betrayal of American KGB spy Aldrich Ames; Stephen Tumlin on David Rose's examination of the failure of British justice; Matthew Parris on television's influence on the lives of our children

HARDBACK

1 X-FILES BOOK OF THE UNEXPLAINED Vol 1 Jane Goldman

(Simon & Schuster)

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16 £14.99 0 1

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18 £14.99 0 1

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20 £14.99 14 2

2 SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS David Guterson (Bloomsbury)

(Vintage)

3 DELIA SMITH'S WINTER COLLECTION Delia Smith (BBC)

(BBC)

4 IMMEDIATE ACTION Andy McNab (Bantam)

(Vintage)

5 THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY Chris Ryan (Century)

(Century)

6 THE CONCISE OXFORD DICTIONARY (OUP)

(Oxford University Press)

7 CHRONICLE OF THE YEAR (Dorling Kindersley)

(Dorling Kindersley)

8 DELIA SMITH'S SUMMER COLLECTION Delia Smith (BBC)

(BBC)

9 X-FILES: GROUND ZERO Kevin J. Anderson (HarperCollins)

(HarperCollins)

10 EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE Daniel Goleman (Bloomsbury)

(Bloomsbury)

11 THE STATE WE'RE IN Will Hutton (Vintage)

(Vintage)

12 BORN TO BE A STAR Julian Barnes (Corgi)

(Corgi)

13 THE EUROPEAN GEORGES GROSSE (Bantam)

(Bantam)

14 SCIENCE MIND & COSMOS OF JOHN BROOKMAN (Phoenix)

(Phoenix)

15 SOPHIE'S WORLD GREGORY PHILIPSON Jostein Gaarder (Phoenix)

(Phoenix)

16 REGENERATION Pat Barker (Penguin)

(Penguin)

17 GODS' UTILITY FUNCTION Richard Dawkins (Phoenix)

(Phoenix

BOOKS

7

NEW IN PAPERBACK



Henry Green: a stylist admired by Auden and Updike

■ PARTY GOING

By Henry Green

Harvill, £9.99

FIRST published by the Hogarth Press in 1939, this story of a group of socialites marooned by Stygian fog in a London railway station is a comedy of manners with strong symbolic undertones.

En route to a house-party in the South of France, the friends of rich young Max Adey have great difficulties reaching their rendezvous, but these are as nothing compared with the inconveniences awaiting them as they are forced to bivouac in the station hotel. Tiresome farewells are protracted: someone falls ill; and, worst of all, flirtations are obliged to be conducted in public, without any means of escape short of leaving through one door and returning through it shortly after.

As worldly Max and his would-be inamorata Julia look down from their privi-

leged oasis on the vast uneasy throng of frustrated passengers below, they see a Persian carpet of lost souls. Groups with luggage look like monuments in a graveyard. Within the hotel, farcical cross-purposes abound, as a manipulative Angela terrorises her beau and Max's beautiful mistress Annabel coolly paints her fingernails. These women are lampooned unctuously as a fiendishly competitive species, drawing on tanks of self-confidence like camels crossing a desert. But even here the atmosphere of delayed departure for the underworld remains.

This powerfully idiosyncratic stylist has long been admired by fellow writers, from Auden to Updike. For the common reader, as for the scholar, the pleasures and possible interpretations are many. We can look forward to seeing the eight other Green novels reissued.

■ A PERSONAL MATTER

By Kenzaburo Oe

Picador, £5.99

THE CENTRAL character of this novel, whose author won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1994, is Bird, a frustrated little man in his thirties, still, significantly, known by his adolescent nickname. He teaches English to college rejects at an Osaka crammer and dreams of escaping to Africa. When his unloved wife gives birth to an apparently brain-damaged child, shock and disappointment drive him to seek oblivion in drink and the arms of an ex-girlfriend, and to increasingly frantic attempts to destroy his son. He is finally forced to realise that he must stop running away and take responsibility not just for the baby, but for himself.



■ VOLGA, VOLGA

A Voyage Down the Great River

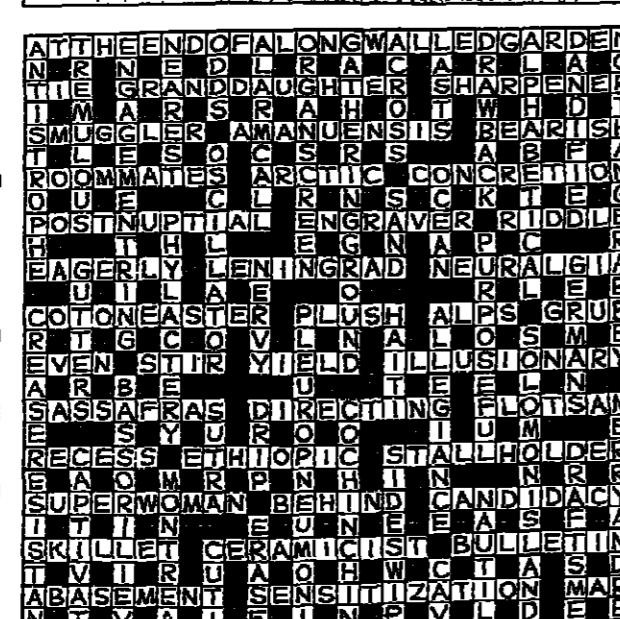
By Lesley Chamberlain

Picador, £7.99

LESLY Chamberlain's engrossing account of her journey down the Volga does not simply describe her colourful personal encounter with Russia's mythic waterway and the people who depend upon it. *Volga, Volga* also provides a lucid historical exploration of the river and its decline, and an insightful evocation of the culture of which it is a part. The river "parallels a physical dehumanisation and it suggests itself as an obvious metaphor for the decay of the Soviet regime and the spiritual pollution of the Russian populous". A bleak vision indeed, but a book well worth reading.

• Contributors: Alison Burns, Fiona Hook, Claire Messud, Tania Glyde

NEW YEAR JUMBO CROSSWORD



The winner of the New Year Jumbo Crossword, published on December 30, is Geoffrey Beale, of Burgess Hill, W. Sussex, who will receive £100 and a Methuselah of Moët & Chandon champagne.

The five runners-up, who will each receive £100, are: Glynn Jones of Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire; Sue Blakely of Wotton, Surrey; Gordon Lee of Newcastle upon Tyne; Ian Smart of Ledminster, Hereford & Worcester; and Irene Winslow of Doncaster, S. Yorkshire.

Facing a Parliament of fouls

Edwina Currie's new blockbuster sticks to its feminist agenda, says Elizabeth Buchan

■ A WOMAN'S PLACE

By Edwina Currie

Hodder & Stoughton, £16.99

excellent cook. Should she can she devote more time to this paradigm?

Elaine is also worried about her daughter, who is recovering from a rape and the interest displayed in her by Betts, a giddy hack. Finally, there is Graham, a mental patient at large in the community with a fixation on Elaine. Loaded with — justifiable — ironies, matters are brought to a head over the closure of a mental hospital.

Hints of vendetta, gossip, playful reference to the figures we know and love and skilful plundering of topical issues fuel the jolly Post-Modernist jostle between the real and the fiction-

al. (By the end of the book, a retired Michael Heseltine has lost his hair and Teresa Gorman "has stopped taking the tablets and shrunk to a benign little granny" — crude perhaps, but it has the satisfying crunch of a well-aimed slug.) Clearly, the author understands the ingredients of the "big" read, milks her feminist agenda appropriately and throws in a bit of special pleading. "Ordinary people," George concludes, musing on his love, "do not aspire to become MPs, let alone ministers."

Now we know. Yet what gives the novel its bottom and immediacy is its portrait of life at Westminster: its smothering, exhausting, destabilising ethos, the damage it inflicts on family life, its huge frustrations. Brussels on one side and quangos on the other.



Putting the stiletto into politics

Decisions are taken by others but the Government is held to account.

"I feel as though I'm vanishing," Elaine cries, and if she cannot dodge round the posts, then Parliament is a dehumanising place indeed.

Brush strokes and flesh tones

■ SUMMER IN FEBRUARY

By Jonathan Smith

Little, Brown, £12.99

IF YOU are going to put real people in a novel — often a dubious enterprise — artists are the best choice. They are more likely to drink, have busy, complicated sex lives and live and work in interesting and beautiful surroundings than, say, structural engineers or microbiologists.

For *Summer in February*, Jonathan Smith has focused on the group of painters who settled in Lamorna Cove just before the First World War. Their leader was Alfred Munnings, a future president of the Royal Academy, but then as a young painter of exceptional promise a reckless, lewd, fated-to-tosser, redeemed by his talent and his gift for friendship.

Laura Knight, already painting her splashy, vigorous canvases, is captivated by Munnings; her fastidious aristocrat husband, Harold, less so.

Oddly, Munnings's closest chum is a diligent Army officer turned land agent, Captain Gilbert Evans, who is everything that Munnings is not: a model of rectitude, decency and restraint. Proving that they have at least one thing in common, they both fall in love with the same girl: Florence Carter-Wood, newly arrived in Cornwall to study with the renowned art teacher Stanhope Forbes.

As capricious as she is beautiful, Florence marries Munnings and then discovers that Gilbert is the one she really loves. The price she pays for choosing the wrong man is a terrible one and casts shadows over the lives of the two men, haunting them down all the years.

This is a book rich in incident and richer still in its subtle and intricate analysis of emotional depths. It is also a meticulous re-creation of artistic life near the beginning of this century. The glittering Cornish coastline, the ravishing flesh tones of artists' models are always described in a painterly way as, for instance, when the sea lifts itself up "in big, long surges of grey lit up by a multitude of white dots", or when Laura Knight, eyeing up Florence, thinks that she has "the tone and quality of a quiet sitting-room". It is as though a fascinating picture has been captured in words.

PENNY PERRICK

Editor in love child snatch bid

■ IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ENEMY

By Elizabeth George

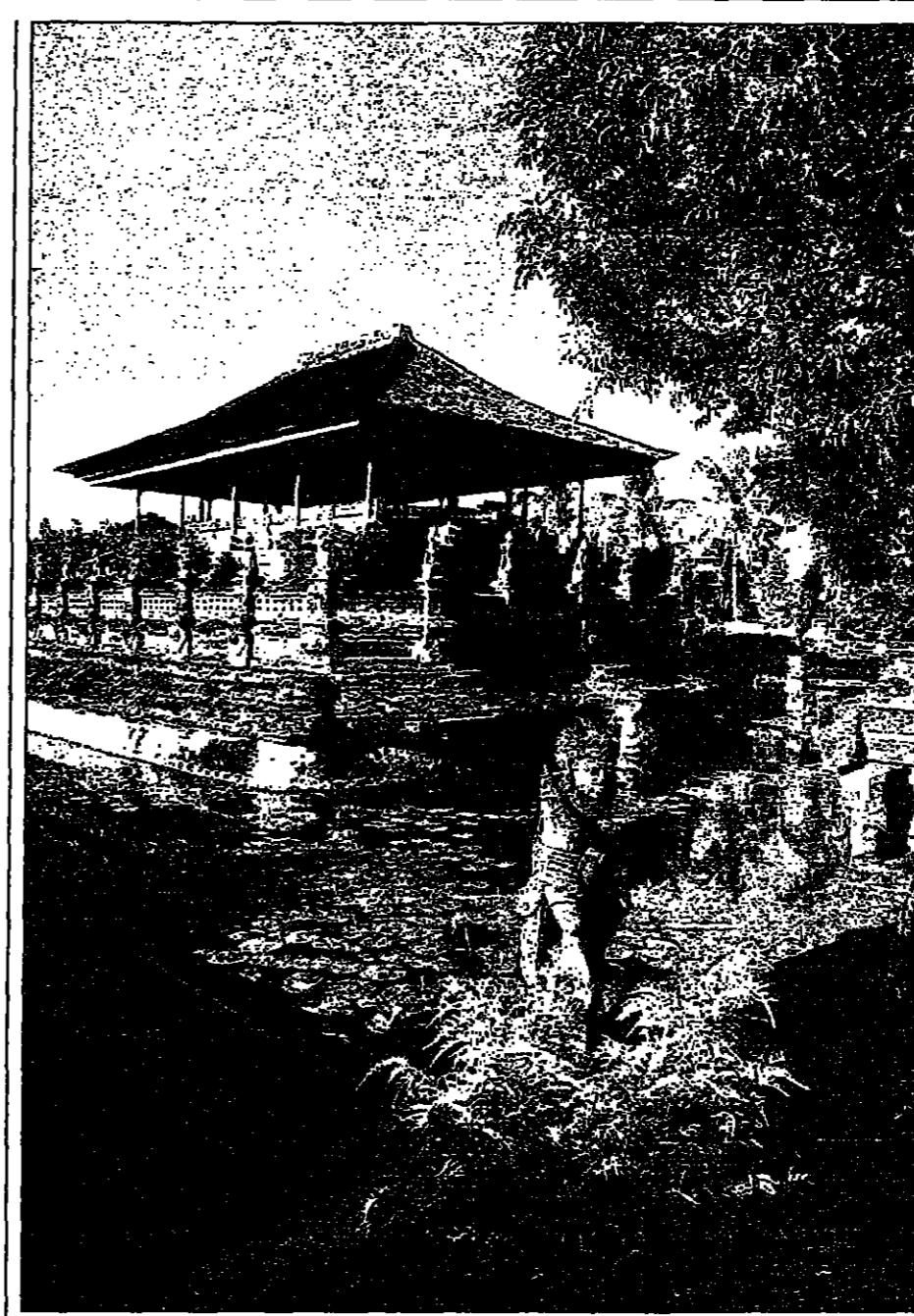
Bantam, £16.99

Editorial partnership has developed interestingly.

Elizabeth George believes in giving her characters room to develop. Bowen's cold distaste of Luxford, the dishonourable marriages which both have contrived and the lack of warmth and understanding towards their children are conveyed with subtlety and fine writing. George is also a superb purveyor of fear, malevolent atmosphere (never has Wiltshire seemed so scary) and warped minds. She has researched well: the worlds of Parliament and tabloid journalism have the whiff of veracity. Above all, she has a gift for sheer storytelling and invention — in spades.

Nobody can accuse George of short-changing her readers in volume. This is a long, intricate book, at nearly 500 pages. Yet so cleverly does she manage the narrative threads, so convincingly do her characters behave on the edge of their emotions, so startling are the twists to her tale that I could read more.

MARCEL BERLINS

Paradise regained: pavilion in a royal garden, from *Balinese Gardens*. photographs by Luca Invernizzi Tettoni, text by William Warren (Thames & Hudson, £29.95)

Andrew Knight traces the pugnacious career of a Canadian press mogul with a mushrooming global empire

Black rises out of the blue

■ SHADES OF BLACK

By Richard Siklos

Heinemann, £20



Black: happy to share the joke

special line in malapropism, are the stocks in trade of the "verbal punch-ups" which Black "enjoys". He sees constantly to re-assure himself that he is a worthy successor to his colourful and, in the end, reclusive father.

The result is odd. Black has sued for libel repeatedly, like Robert Maxwell, and always won well short of the court steps. His financial shuffling of assets has yielded the values necessary to buy newspapers, frequently crossing the fine of controversy but never, so far as one can see, of probity. Along the way his sardines have become a joke, relished as much by himself as anyone.

All his newspapers have improved, though to hear some in Jerusalem, Sydney and Melbourne, you would not credit it. When he joined the big league at the *Telegraph*, he understood that quality and character can go hand in hand with cost-cutting. That can, in fact, be enhanced by it. That lesson has been spread elsewhere.

Insecurity was a useful tool in the education of the neophyte press lord. "Whenever he met anybody that he looked up to or that he was impressed by, he always wanted to know what they thought of him." Conrad's role to some extent is to ingratiate himself in certain circles" from which new leads, partners or influence might be found. His galactic board meetings are William Buckley says, "a little bit dizzy". Knobbed up, adds Black, "with important people who can be helpful".

"Sometimes inclined to give the benefit of the doubt, apparently very rich men", Black is, in sum, refreshingly politically incorrect. A joke himself, "he's always laughing, either with or at people". This may surprise many who have been intimidated by his heavy look, wearied by lengthy history lessons, or have sat through his "extremely ornate and boring" public speeches. Black has a lot yet to prove, but this sardine and friendly book may help to give him the self-confidence to prove it.

Andrew Knight was chief executive of The Daily Telegraph from 1985 to 1993 and executive chairman of News International.

Maybe it's because he's a Londoner

■ A WHITE MERC WITH FINS

By James Hawes

Jonathan Cape, £12.99



Hawes: combative dialogue

THE FIRST few pages of James Hawes's much-hyped new novel test the reader's endurance to the limit. It is all so aggressive and hip and generally in-your-face, get ready for wall-to-wall F-words and overgrown boys with plastic guns who want to be Quentin Tarantino. It is also one of those designed-to-frustate jump starts which plunge you into a conversation you have no grasp of and no hope of understanding until you have read the whole book and then go back to the beginning again.

However, if you hold fast and break through to chapter two, Hawes gets into his stride and starts pulling you into his male protagonist's wry, downbeat take on what you do when life somehow does not deliver what college and middle-class aspirations led you to expect. Suddenly, he says, "the

class awareness, inhabiting classic chip-on-shoulder territory. Yet Hawes pumps so much up-front humour into his characters that they win you over, despite all their infuriating political posturing in this world where being HIV positive gives you extra points for cool. From the brain-dead

When is a shop not a shop?



Always on Page 2
and in Weekend Money

RECORDINGS

NEW ON CD: Mercury's jazz gems; overripe cheese; evocative guitar concertos; English opera voices from the 1940s

JAZZ

Clive Davis

CLAUDE MARTIN

Offbeat

THE OUTSTANDING BRITISH JAZZ SINGER OF THE 1990S, CLAIRE MARTIN IS ANOTHER ARTIST WHO SPURNS EXTRAVAGANCE, IN THE PROCESS REDUCING EACH SONG TO ITS ESSENCE. RECORDED LIVE AT RONNIE SCOTT'S, OFFBEAT SHOWCASES HER UNORTHODOX TASTE IN MODERN LYRICS — LAURA NYRO.



Martin: no extravagance

Phoebe Snow and Stevie Wonder are all represented. As a balladeer she leaves her most intense displays to the very end, on *Wonders Make Sure You're Sure* and *Some Other Time* from the worldly partnership of Bernstein, Comden and Green.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

The Mercury Records Jazz Story

Verve 524688-3 (2 CDs) ★★

HOW MANY PEOPLE, IF ASKED TO NAME THE LEADING JAZZ LABELS OF THE PAST HALF CENTURY, WOULD PUT MERCURY NEAR THE TOP OF THEIR LIST? NOT MANY, I SUSPECT. COMPARED WITH THE SHARPLY DEFINED HARD-BOP ETHOS OF BLUE NOTE'S 1950S OUTPUT, FOR EXAMPLE, MERCURY AND ITS VARIOUS OFFSHOOTS APPEARED HAPPY TO PURSUE HALF A DOZEN DIFFERENT MUSIC POLICIES AT ANY GIVEN TIME.

IF THAT WAS NOT SO GOOD FOR THE ALL-IMPORTANT CORPORATE IMAGE, IT MAKES FOR A PROVOCATIVE, MULTICOLOURED ANTHOLOGY — NOT TO MENTION AN INDISPENSABLE JAZZ PRIMER. THOUGH MOST OF THE MATERIAL IS DRAWN FROM THE 1950S AND 1960S, DAN

NEW ON VIDEO: Gorillas to be missed; nature under a surrealist's microscope; royal suicide made painless

■ CONGO

CIC, 12, 1995
VIEWERS starved of fantasy escapism may find relief in the diamond hunters, gorillas and volcanoes thrown together in this surprisingly low-grade hokum from director Frank Marshall, adapted from Michael Crichton's book. Sometimes the film tries to be cute; sometimes it aims to scare. The script is usually not up to either task, but the unstarry cast plough ahead regardless. Principal curiosities include Amy, the talking gorilla, and Tim Curry's amusing turn as a shifty entrepreneur from Romania. Available to rent.

■ KISS OF DEATH

Fox Guild, 18, 1995
DAVID CARUSO found his first film role outside *NYPD Blue* as the vulnerable former convict trying to go straight in this partial remake of the famous 1947 thriller. But he becomes wallpaper whenever Nicolas Cage barges in as Little Junior, a nasty gangster bulging with muscles: a performance with all the realism of a circus clown. Barbet Schroeder's film boasts a script by the esteemed Richard Price, but any sympathy for the Caruso character's plight is increasingly trampled by gaudy artifice. A rental release.

■ HALLOWEEN

MIA, 18, 1978
THE FILM that spawned a thousand bad imitations returns to video in a digitally remastered, wide-screen edition that includes the original trailer. A small Illinois town is the setting; the time, of course, is Hallowe'en, when babysitters and their friends, led by Jamie Lee Curtis, face the attentions of a maniac who likes to celebrate by slicing people with a butcher's knife. Director John Carpenter does his best to frighten the life out of us, though he does not forget humour: there are plenty of in-jokes for movie buffs.

■ SURREALISM AND SCIENCE

Academy, E
A COMPILATION of the remarkable, beautiful and often unnerving films of Jean Painlevé, the French documentary maker whose short

Falling on My Head, Trains and Boats and Planes, Alfie, I'll Never Fall in Love Again, You'll Never Get to Heaven If You Break My Heart and many more.

Although these are the original recordings by the stars that made them hits in the first place — Dusty Springfield, Dionne Warwick, B. J. Thomas

To much monkey business: Dylan Walsh shares his reading with Amy, the talking gorilla, in Frank Marshall's low-grade hokum, *Congo*

studies, mostly of marine life, combine a scientist's passion for detail with a surrealist's love for the bizarre. The films were made between 1926 and 1976. Highlights include a gruesome homage to the vampire bat (matched to the music of Duke Ellington) and various magnified studies, in glorious colour, of the sexual behaviour of octopuses and shellfish. You may never want to eat seafood again.

■ MAYERLING

Lumière, PG, 1969
CINEMA'S third rendition of Crown Prince Rudolf's misalliance with a commoner is not so much a slice of history, more a slice of cake: the film is top-heavy with imperial bric-a-brac, ornate scenery and tearful music from Francis Lai, Omar Sharif and Catherine Deneuve, as the star-crossed lovers look very pretty but drown among the trap-

pings: the performance you notice above all is James Robertson Justice's jovial Prince of Wales. Also starring Ava Gardner. Directed by Terence Young.

■ TALES OF ORDINARY MADNESS

Art House, 18, 1981
THE TALES derived from Charles Bukowski's writings, are spun by a sodden American poet staggering

through life with a bottle in his hand, self-pity on his lips and lust in his head. Bert Gazzara shows little flair in the role, while Italian director Marco Ferreri, once a byword for purposeful anarchy, merely offers the inert presentation of unendifying shocks. Woe befall us if he ever tackles extraordinary madness.

GEOFF BROWN

POP SINGLE

David Sinclair

■ DUFFY

Needle Mythology
Indolent DUFF 004★
SEVENTEEN years after he dropped out of Duran Duran and 11 years since his only hits (*Kiss Me and Icing on the Cake*), time is not on Stephen Duffy's side. Timing is not his strong point either, and although his self-titled album, released last August, bore all the hallmarks of classic British pop, trying to smuggle him into the charts under the Britpop banner never looked like a serious ploy.

But you cannot blame him for trying, and his new single, *Needle Mythology*, is a crisp tune that falls somewhere between the orthodox song-

as, Billy J. Kramer, Cilla Black, Bobby Gentry, The Stylistics and all the rest — and the assaults which these songs have suffered nightly in cocktail lounges and karaoke bars the world over have taken their toll.

And to think, we fought through two Woodstocks for this.

■ KREMERATA MUSICA

Mahler, Schoenberg, Webern, etc
Kremer/Maisenberg/
Meyer, etc
DG 447 112-2★★

THIS IS AN EXUBERANT little chamber-music festival on disc, works by Mahler, Schoenberg, Berg and Webern bounce bright light off each other in these spirit-cleansing performances by violinist Gidon Kremer and friends.

The innocent ear would be hard put to identify the composer of the 1876 Piano Quartet of track one; but this

commissioned more concertos for the guitar than anybody else, and three of them — all by American composers — are here in premiere recordings. All three make imaginative use of the intimate nature of the guitar, with the result that these are essentially pieces of evocation and fantasy rather than vehicles for display.

John Corigliano, best known for his opera *The Ghosts of Versailles*, takes the opportunity to retreat from the spotlight, looking back across the centuries for his inspiration to the courtly love tradition of the medieval troubadours. His *Troubadour*, subtitled *Variations for Guitar and Orchestra*, conjures the sonorities of that world, subtly dissolving them into a nostalgic haze.

Joseph Schwantner's *From Afar* has more drama but also a strong feeling for colour and atmosphere, superbly caught by Isbin and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra under Hugh Wolff.

Lukas Foss's *American Landscapes for Guitar and Orchestra* is different again. Drawing on the folksy American tradition to which the guitar is central, Foss intercuts pastoral sequences with snatches of jigs and reels. Nifty fingerwork and improvisatory skills are called for in the spirited finale, which whisks to an anarchically Ivesian conclusion amid strains of *America the Beautiful*.

John Hargreaves' damming the courtiers in *Rigoletto* sounds like Noel Coward bucking up the chaps in *In Which We Serve* and Gladys Ripley cursing Eboli's fatal beauty in *Don Carlos* has all the irritation of a hostess whose cucumber sandwiches are not quite right. But there are treasures elsewhere, especially among the tenors. Heddle Nash is present, showing exquisite and sustained mezzo voice in Nadir's aria from *The Pearl Fishers*. David Lloyd, a colleague at prewar Glyndebourne, less well known but with a weightier voice, comes across as an expert Mozarian. And there is James Johnston, several years before Covent Garden cast him opposite Callas, robust and easy in *The Bartered Bride*.

The Commonwealth singers include Joan Hammond in a very early recording of *O my beloved father*, the Puccini that was to become her calling card — a bit rough and she was later to do much better under Walter Legge. Oscar Natika, from New Zealand, relishes *Faust*'s drinking song from *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Kari Ranki and the Covent Garden Orchestra back him in a way that suggests some of the flak that the German conductor had to endure when he was trying to re-establish the Royal Opera after the war might have been misdirected.

Dennis Noble, possibly London's most famous Rosin in the 1930s and 1940s, gets a CD to himself. He gallops through *I'm the factotum* in fewer than four minutes in a record made at the start of his career in 1929. When he came back to it ten years later he took another 30 seconds, a track included in the *Stars* issue. With Webster Booth as Almaviva, Noble shows real style in the Act I duet as aristo and barber work out how to get at Rosina. Noble's repertoire was considerable and he ranged easily from Mozart's *Figaro* telling *Cherubino* what to expect ("Here's an end to your romps

in the hay, lad! Here's an end to the life that is gay, lad") to Verdi's *Iago*.

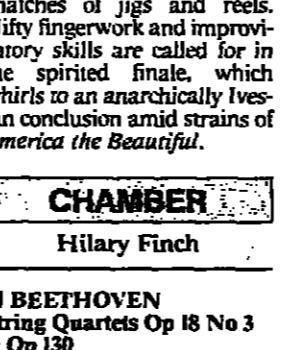
It is a pity that the selection contains no Puccini, but it does have a delectable sentimental *Stendhal* Bennett number of a late-night carouser returning home to a faithful hound: "A rough-haired pup/ Will be sitting up/ To say good night to you". Gerald Moore, the accompanist, was doubtless wagging his tail at the piano.

How about a James Johnston issue next?

★ Worth hearing
★★ Worth considering
★★★ Worth buying



Duffy: well-intended



Hilary Finch

■ BEETHOVEN

String Quartets Op 18 No 3 & Op 130
Emerson String Quartet
DG 447 505-2★★★

HARD ON THE HEELS OF LINDSAY'S CYCLE AT THE Wigmore Hall, the Emerson Quartet has just arrived at the Queen Elizabeth Hall for a ten-day session of the complete Beethoven string quartets. Meanwhile, this disc provides a sampler of its style.

The Emersons now play with an authority and polish which mark them out as *éminences demi-grises* of their profession. Where the Lindseys take risks, the Emersons view the music from above, their part-writing finely honed, chording mahogany-grained and each note trimly tucked into place in the Presto finale of the Op 18 No 3.

Their performance of the Op 130, with the *Grosse Fuge*, is magisterial. The contrasts of its opening are carved out fearlessly, while the players maintain a clear, strong view of the work's grand design. The Presto is secretive: the Cavatina trembles with a real sense of music heard in the innermost being of the composer, and the great fugue fully captures the mystery and awe of its making.

student work of the 16-year-old Mahler is given a properly impassioned performance. Then comes an early work by Schoenberg, Kremer and Oleg Maisenberg make this tiny, recently discovered early piece in D minor for violin and piano a real spring song.

The 15-year-old Webern wrote two pieces for cello and piano which Maisenberg and Clemens Hagen reveal as dreamlike glimpses of the extreme distillations to come. Here are the tiny, prismatic Four Pieces for Violin and Piano of 1910, and the even tinier bright splinters of the Three Little Pieces for Cello and Piano of 1914. And in between these glinting performances comes Berg's Four Pieces for Clarinet and Piano, in which Sabine Meyer luxuriates in the composer's minuscule expressionist art.

The programme ends with Berg's pungent arrangement for clarinet, violin and piano of the Adagio from the Chamber Concerto, and with Schoenberg's last instrumental work, the String Trio of 1946 and the Phantasia for Violin and Piano of 1949, each pushed to its expressive limits.

■ 20TH CENTURY

Barry Millington

■ CORIGLIANO/ SCHWANTNER/FOSS

American Landscapes: Guitar Concertos

Isbin/Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra/Wolff

Virgin VC 55083 2★★★

FEW guitarists have done more to expand the repertoire for their instrument than the brilliant virtuoso Sharon Isbin. Certainly Isbin has

written style of *Squeeze* and the more up-to-date sound of, say, the Lightning Seeds.

Its anti-heroin lyric is well-intended if rather literal: "Why make your drug of choice your goodbye to the world?" — but Duffy sings it with just the right degree of world-weary detachment, while guitars and an electric piano twinkle brightly.

It is a deft, understated piece, and again Duffy has captured a mood that is more timeless than timely.

The programme ends with Berg's pungent arrangement for clarinet, violin and piano of the Adagio from the Chamber Concerto, and with Schoenberg's last instrumental work, the String Trio of 1946 and the Phantasia for Violin and Piano of 1949, each pushed to its expressive limits.

■ CHAMBER

Hilary Finch

■ BEETHOVEN

String Quartets Op 18 No 3 & Op 130

Emerson String Quartet

DG 447 505-2★★★

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Retirement court

PROPERTY

11

With two of Britain's great landmarks for sale, Cheryl Taylor finds other beauty spots to buy

Waterfalls, caverns and coves

You may be surprised to learn that many of Britain's landmarks and beauty spots are privately owned. The two best known, Land's End and John o' Groats, went on sale jointly this month for £5.5 million.

Land's End attracts about 500,000 visitors a year. John o' Groats' 250,000. Both have established tourist and leisure businesses, employing a total of 200 people, with a joint turnover of about £3.5 million.

Land's End, comprising 100 acres of pastureland and cliffs, visitors' centre, car parks, hotel complex and holiday cottages, has changed hands three times in 15 years. David Golstone, a property developer, bought it from the Neave-Hill family in 1981, selling it five years later to the property tycoon Peter de Savary, who pumped in another £5 million. A New Zealand company, Gulf Resources Pacific, which also acquired John o' Groats' bought Land's End in 1992 and has since spent £1 million upgrading facilities.

The 20-acre John o' Groats' site, with its 15-bed hotel, bar

and shop, has planning permission to expand the hotel and develop visitor attractions, for which a grant may be available from the Highlands and Islands Enterprise Company.

Estate agent Nigel Talbot-Ponsonby, of Humbers Leisure, reports worldwide interest for the two landmarks. The National Trust, however, is not in the market, despite its attempt to buy Land's End in 1981, when it was outbid. The two properties are not considered by the trust to be under threat or in urgent need of care and attention and, therefore, do not warrant trust funds.

If you fancy owning a landmark, there are smaller, and cheaper, pieces of Britain on the market. British Coal is selling part of Offa's Dyke in the disposal of more than 1,000 acres of agricultural land and property in northeast Wales. The 120-metre section of the historic earthworks at Rhosyfelin, near Wrexham, part of 80 surviving miles of ditch and embankment, was built by the King of Mercia 1,200 years ago to mark his

frontier. The agents, Carter Jonas, expect this Ancient Monument, with 96 acres of arable land let on five farm business tenancies, to fetch about £150,000.

In Devon, there are two beauty spots for sale within the Dartmoor National Park,

which attracts about 10 million visitors a year to its 368 square miles of moor and grassland.

Becky Falls, at Manaton near Bovey Tracey, with waterfall, bridges and woodland paths in 45 acres, is for sale at £1.4m through Jackson-Stops & Staff. The estate, which

includes a restaurant, ice-cream parlour, tea garden, gift shop, car park, owner's house and outbuildings, attracts 200,000 visitors a year and has planning consent for a Study and Interpretation Centre.

Or, you could buy Badger's Holt, an 11th-century former fishing lodge to the Manor of Spitchwick, in 5.5 acres of woodland gardens, on the banks of the East Dart river at Dartmeet, which attracts around 250,000 visitors a year.

The property includes a licensed restaurant and bar, gift shop, ice-cream kiosk, parking for 200 cars, four-bedroom owner's accommodation, gardens with aviary, stable block and fishing rights. Within the National Park, Badger's Holt has commoners' grazing rights for two mares and their foals. The agent Knight Frank is looking for offers of about £750,000. There is no management.

agreement with the Dartmoor National Parks authority at Becky Falls or Badger's Holt, which means public access to the properties is at the owner's discretion. Similarly, visitors to Land's End pay up to £5 a head in high season.

Also in Devon, Knight Frank is asking £1.5 million for The Fisherman's Cot, a 23-bedroom hotel, restaurant and bar on the banks of the River Exe, next to the 14th-century Bickleigh Bridge, four miles from Tiverton. It gets about 51,000 visitors a year and has been a favourite haunt of authors and songwriters over the years — it is said that Paul Simon wrote *Bridge Over Troubled Water* there. The property comes with parking for 90 cars, 2.7 acres of landscaped gardens, a licensed riverside terrace, stable block and a quarter of a mile of double-bank salmon and sea trout fishing rights.

Alternatively, Carniglaze Caverns, at St Neot, part of Cornwall's tin mining heritage in a secluded valley bordering the River Laveny, can be yours for £350,000 through Knight Frank. Quarrying ceased about 1903, but the public were not admitted until 1973 to view the magnificent caverns, which now attract 7,000 visitors a year.

The price includes a two-bedroom cottage, shop, car parking, 6.5 acres of sloping woodland gardens and extensive underground caverns, with former quarry workings, featuring a subterranean pool.

Also in Cornwall, the agents Miller & Sons is looking for offers of about £50,000 for the Iron Age Treblyds court yard village in 3.5 acres adjoining Chun Castle and surrounded by National Trust land near Newbridge. A scheduled Ancient Monument, it comprises the remains of five courtyard houses, a number of round houses and a 2,000-year-old burial chamber. As yet, the site is not on the tourist track.

• **Humbers Leisure**, 0171-629 6700; **Jackson, Stops & Staff**, 01392 214222; **Knight Frank**, 01392 423111; **Carter Jonas**, 0171-629 7154; **Miller & Sons**, 01566 776055.

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£230,000

KENT
Uphouse, Westmarsh, near Canterbury. Grade II listed medieval half house in an acre of gardens. Four bedrooms, two bathrooms (one en suite), drawing room, dining room, study, kitchen, utility and cellar. Cottage for refurbishment and garage. About £230,000 (Strutt & Parker, 01227 451123).

£230,000

LONDON
4, Burnaby Street, Chelsea, SW10. Period terraced house with garden. Four bedrooms, bathroom, cloakroom, drawing room, dining room, kitchen/breakfast room and utility room. About £289,000 (John D. Wood, 0171-352 1484).

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Scotland's company of wolves

Wild animals including lynx and beaver may be reintroduced to the Highlands

In the depths of what remains of the Caledonian pine forest it is not hard to conjure up might-have-beens and once-upon-a-times. If it is wilderness you crave, the sense of it is there at least.

If you yearn for the cry of the wolf on the wind, or the slap of a beaver tail on the still surface of a hidden lochan, there are trees there that know what you are talking about. They are mighty survivors. The spread of your arms won't go halfway round their girth, and they can reach back to the Ice Age in 30 generations. They are nature's historic monuments.

One such tree is screened by a small stockade of birches, junipers and lesser pines, which conspire to shield its immensity. But step into the arena that the tree has cleared for itself within the stockade and marvel at its showpiece qualities: the classical flat-crowned Scots pine, the Gothic spread of limbs.

It is, perhaps, 70ft high, 20ft round the base. One root is 2ft thick, its bark is 3in deep in places. If the golden eagle is the king of birds, here is a golden eagle among pines. Such a tree remembers the pad of wolves.

Sadly there are few such trees, but there are no wolves at all. The great forests, the wolf's domain, were felled. For centuries, for as long as man had ceased to be a hunter-gatherer and settled for the life of herdsman, he first feared, then became obsessed by the wolf. Not only did he account for its extinction in the mid-18th century, he obliterated many other species and countless square miles of pristine forest.

The pine forest remnants we know are empty places and amount to 1 per cent of the forest that was. But the tide is turning. Conservation has begun to think big, to contemplate restoration on a scale which almost matches people's old capacity for destruction.

The case for restoring and recreating big forests of native trees has moved from the fringes of the conservation movement to the centre. The old order of deer forest and sheep farm are being questioned, and, emboldened by the reintroduction of sea eagle, goshawk and red kite, a new *cri de coeur* is on conservationists' lips: "Bring back the big



The wolf was extinct in Scotland by the middle of the 18th century. Whether they can be reintroduced will depend on the extent to which the great, ancient forests can be recreated



Lynx and wild boar still prowl the European mainland, and are the more likely species to be reintroduced to Britain



So long? Fifty years, maybe more. Once we have the environment changed and people's minds up to speed, they might accept wolves. They're not as dangerous as... oh, a high-cholesterol breakfast is more dangerous than the wolf."

You can see captive wolves, lynx and wild boar in Scotland, and in the course of making two radio programmes recently, I eyeballed them all: I saw a lynx (a cat big enough to fell a roe deer) leap 8ft to take a swipe at a passing magpie; I saw a 400lb waist-high boar devour a newly killed pigeon whole; and I looked longingly into the yellow eyes of a dominant old alpha male wolf patrolling a plantation of Scots pines. In my mind as I looked at him was the account by an American writer, Barry Lopez, of an incident in wolf education at a US school.

That day the children were very excited. A wolf was coming to visit the school. Before it arrived, their teacher asked them to paint a picture of a wolf. They all drew fierce animals with very big fangs. Later the wolf came. Afterwards their teacher asked them to draw another picture. This time there were no fangs. All the pictures showed wolves with very big feet."

Will it happen? I'm optimistic because we've run out of alternatives. It's only a matter of time before the sheep subsidy system goes down the tubes and then we'll be faced with major social breakdown. It has to happen, so it will."

JIM CRUMLEY

• The writer is the author of 12 books on Scottish landscape and wildlife, including Badgers on the Highland Edge (Cape, £14.99), Among Mountains and Among Islands (Mainstream, £14.99) and The Heart of Skye (Collin Baxter, £9.95).

Feather Report
Playing hide and seek

THE LEA VALLEY bitterns are back. Near Cheshunt, 14 miles north of London, there is a reed-bed where they are now regular winter visitors — four of them this year. And these are bitterns that come with all mod cons — for the birdwatcher, that is, because the reed-bed is in front of a large, wooden hide with seats and viewing slots.

I went for my annual view last week. I don't really like hides, but this is too good a chance to miss — and I was lucky. I had not been in the hide two minutes before a wave of excitement and whisperings of "Where? where?" ran through the watchers. In the reeds it was just possible to make out the shape of a bittern, crouching with its beak pointing at a 60-degree angle to the sky. Most of its plumage blended so perfectly with the reeds that if you took your eyes off it you could lose it. Some people couldn't see it at all.

Then it moved, stepping slowly forward into a narrow, open channel between the reeds, and everybody had a wonderful view. You could see the long yellow streaks with jagged edges on its body, and the dark blue crown. It stalked a few yards through



Regular visits: the bittern

the water, turned back into the reeds and vanished.

Meanwhile, a kingfisher flashed by, hovered, and settled on a pole, its top knot ruffled, its blue back shining. Like the rainbow and the cuckoo's song in W. H. Davies's poem, we had two amazing fisher birds presented to our senses in one rare moment.

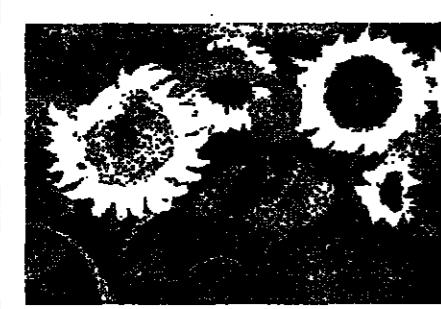
The hide is currently open every day. For details phone 01992 713833.

DERWENT MAY

• What's about: *Birders* — Listen for the repetitive tee-cher call of the great tit. *Twitchers* — a male, black-throated thrush at Webheath, Hereford & Worcester; a hoopoe at Eversley, Hampshire; a king eider at Tayport, Fife. Details from Birdline 0891 700222. Calls cost 40p a minute cheap rate, 50p at all other times.

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Whitechapel High Street, London E1
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BRADFORD, WEST YORKSHIRE
"Survival Island" at the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television

Celebrating 100 years of British cinema in 1996 with major exhibitions, events and festival, the museum houses Britain's largest cinema experience. "IMAX" David Attenborough's debut on the "IMAX" screen offers a chance to explore the natural history of South Georgia. Admission £3.90 adults, £2.70 concessions and children

Passport holders are entitled to two for one adult admission
Pictureville, Bradford Tel 01274 727488
Screenings Tues-Sun 12 noon, 2pm, 4pm, closed
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WAKEFIELD, WEST YORKSHIRE
"Magdalena Abakanowicz" at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park

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THE TIMES

SAILING: Edward Gorman on the trials and triumphs of a DIY refit

Nothing is ever plain sailing

costs down by doing a lot of the work yourself.

Neil and Fiona Tiplady from Redhill in Surrey embarked on exactly that strategy just over a year ago when, after six months of hunting, they bought *Keeshond*, a Holman & Pye Super Sovereign 35 foot ketch, built in 1973.

They had been looking for a sturdy and reliable cruising home on which to extend their sailing horizons after completing a number of Royal Yachting Association courses and enjoying a charter holidays abroad.

There is also the annoyingly expensive knock-on effect of moving any fitting to a new location in a yacht.

During the year-long refit of my own boat *Nutcracker* I used to compare it to those places where moving one square involves moving all the others. You get the one you want in the right place — say the bilge pump — but all the others, the batteries, cooker, fuel tank and cabin heater are now displaced and have to be relocated.

Despite all this, and the enormous cost in both money and time involved in a comprehensive refit, more and more people do have a go at it, enticed by the very reasonable second-hand prices available for late 1960s and early 1970s cruising yachts, many of which are far more elegant and sea-kindly than their modern counterparts.

So long as the surveyor is convinced the basics are sound — hull, deck and rig — it makes sense to buy relatively cheaply and then spend perhaps the same again bringing the boat up to scratch. If you are handy at woodwork, wiring and mechanics, and have confidence in your skills, you can keep

them began last January, intending to have it all finished for an inaugural sail by August. But with the work still going on this year, they are now aiming at a re-launch this April.

Fiona showed me around the unfinished interior last week. "I knew it would take us a long time to get it cosmetically how we wanted it, but I didn't realise how much work there would be," she said. Neil estimates that they will have spent more than £15,000 by the time they finish, despite doing most of the work themselves. They have also scoured the country for good deals on parts.

The experience of working on *Keeshond* has left Neil with at least three hard and fast rules. The first is that every job takes three times longer than you think it will. The second is that if you think something will fit easily and simply assume the exact opposite. And the third: don't be surprised if you end up having a blazing row with your partner in the boat shed. It's not you or him or her, it's boats.

The work on *Keeshond* began with six weeks spent dismantling the rig, the deck fittings (which had to be drilled off), the heads, galley and chart

table. The engine was removed, as were the old wiring, piping and tanks.

Then Fiona and Neil set about scraping all the old sealer out of the deck seams, before rescaling them after replacing many of the screws and dowels. Neil spent at least two weekends overhauling the engine, changing some of the sump gaskets, replacing the alternator and moving the heat exchanger from the front to the side.

Fiona meanwhile set about the marathon task of stripping back all the woodwork on deck and in the cockpit for revarnishing, and rescaling the hatch covers and windows, all of which leaked. While this was under way, professionals in the yard renewed the hull's protective coatings, and Neil replaced all the seacocks.

The next phase, which is still under way, is the rebuilding of the galley to include a double sink and microwave; the rebuilding of the chart table; and the redesign of the heads, which include a shower. Still to come is new wiring, the re-installation of the 50hp Perkins engine and a new generator, and seven new water and diesel tanks, custom-made to fit the now pristine bilges.

There have been moments when both of them have longed for it all to be over. But they have never lost momentum and know they will be glad of their efforts by this summer. "I'm getting the absolute confidence that I know where everything is and why it is there," said Neil. "We wanted a boat that won't leak, and I wanted the confidence of knowing how everything is attached and knowing it will stay attached."

The biggest worry is the engine, because it still hasn't been run. The other big worry is us — can we handle her? He cast a wary eye over a windy Chichester harbour where *Keeshond* will soon make her first voyage as a virtually new boat.



The Tipladys on *Keeshond*

مكتبة الأطفال

SHOPPING

13

DENZIL McNEELANCE

Buckle up and prepare for a little belt tightening

Animal-print belts and accessories add style to the sleek silhouettes in vogue this season

Skinny "fake snake" and "mock croc" belts are winding their way around the waists of women's fitted jackets and trouser suits, replacing the soft pastel shades of summer with a textured jungle effect. The more exotic belts add bite to last summer's soft Jackie Kennedy look without taking away its sophistication.

Pale blue and pink patent belts have been replaced with brown and black, which work well with camel, a favourite shade this season.

"Women want to look groomed again," says Carol Richardson, fashion spokeswoman at Marks & Spencer. "It is a very lady-like silhouette this winter, like the Duchess of Windsor or Audrey Hepburn. It is a lot more polished than in the past few years."

The thin, fake snake leather belts at Marks & Spencer have a cream-and-brown print with covered buckles and cost about £8 (sizes 8 to 14). They are among the cheaper belts in high street stores.

Mulberry's belts are made from calf skin, which makes them more expensive at £35-£99. They come in lizard and crocodile print, black or brown, with a textured effect called Nile, Congo or Tangier. Its new funkier ranges, Cleopatra, Asp and Luxor, Viper, have an "antique" snake-print effect and a high-gloss finish.

Stores such as Loewe, Coach and Hermès, renowned for their leather products, stock belts at the top end of the price range. At Hermès, depending on the type of leather or skin used, belts cost from approximately £200 to £1,000. They can be made to order in exotic skins, such as ostrich and crocodile. The company's range of colours includes bright yellow and green; and some of its belts can be reversed. The buckles are detachable for this purpose. The

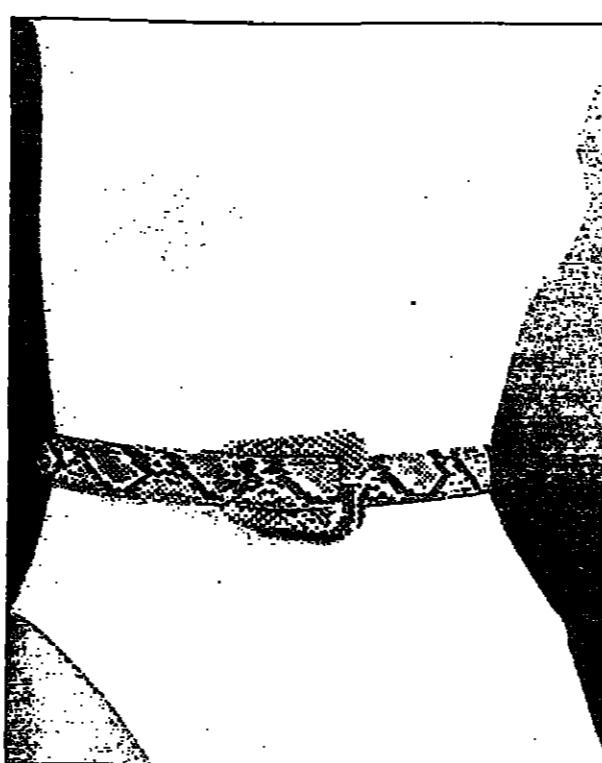
MORAG PRESTON

If you prefer your belts loose or low-slung, the latest range of choker belts by Chanel and Prada can either be worn tight around the waist or slung loosely around the hips — for a price.

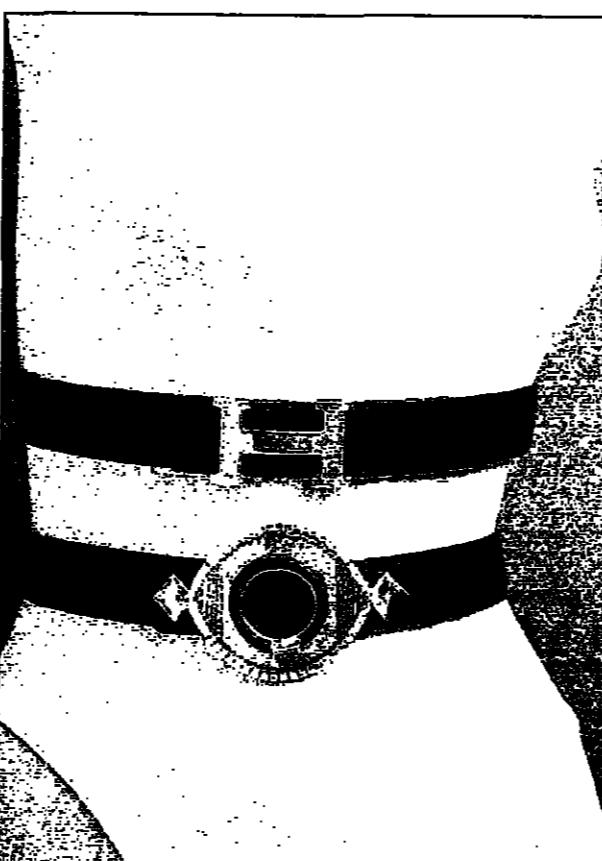
Alternatively, Otto Glanz's leather belt with a "snaffle" buckle will instantly revive a pair of trousers for a more modest £38.

As part of the "tot look" this season, belts come with matching accessories in animal print. A strappy, high-heeled, mock-croc sandal is available at Marks & Spencer. There are also fine leather gloves and animal-print handbags to complete the set. Mulberry has taken the finishing touches a stage further with mini bags, and purses with a 1950s-style wrist strap.

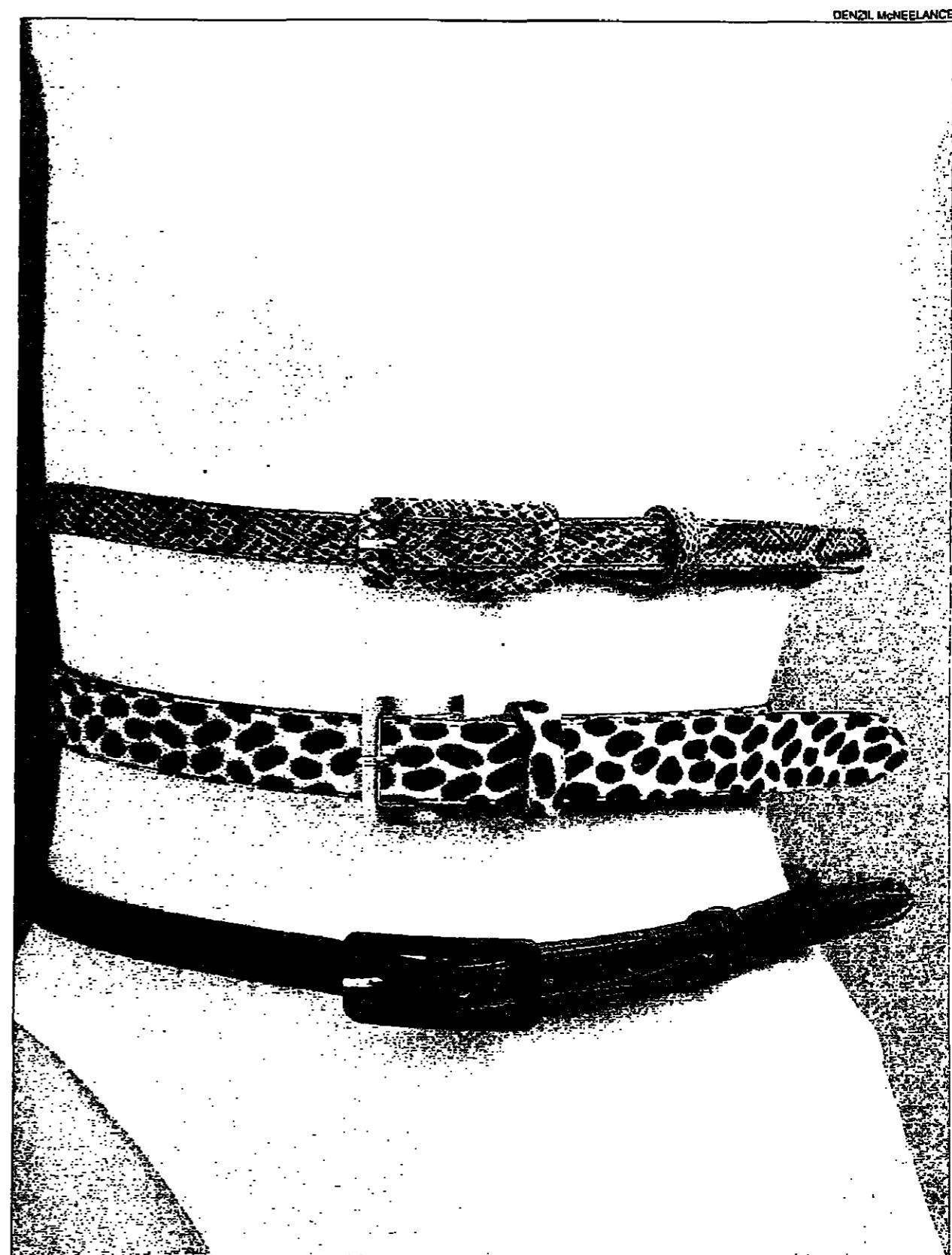
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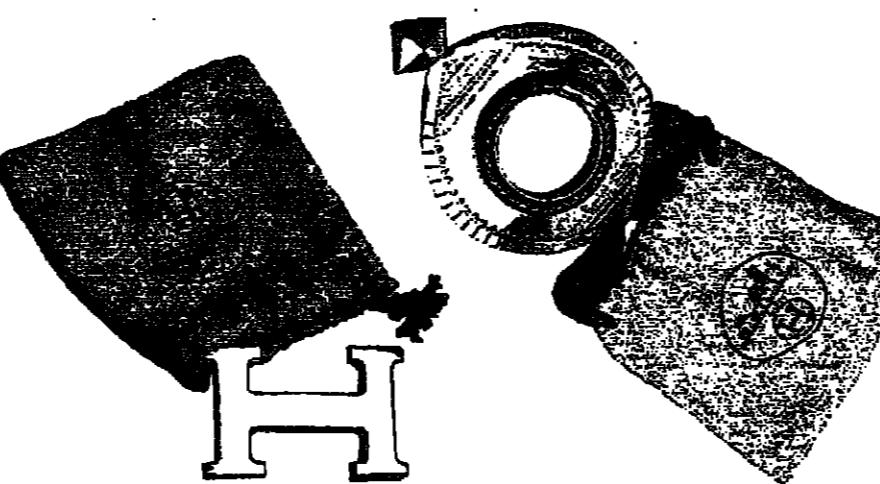
Plastic "fake-snake" belt from Pink Soda, £7.99



Top-of-the-range belts from Hermès — £195 (top) and £455



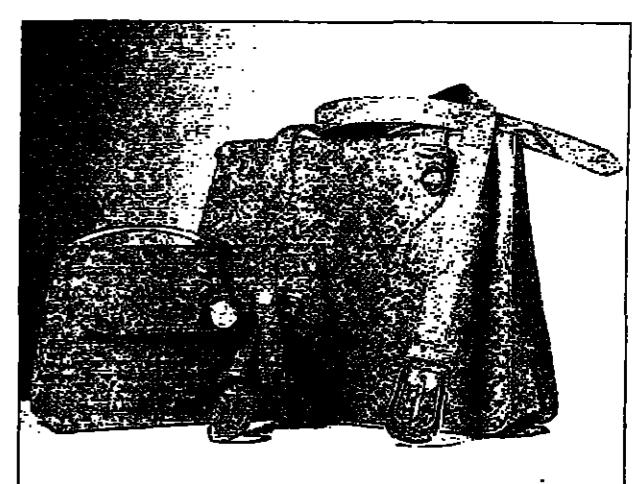
These jungle-effect belts from Marks & Spencer cost around £8. They are ideal for sprucing up old suits and jackets



Hermès provides traditional soft drawstring bags to protect its heavy buckles

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Mulberry belt (left, £30), bag (£130); viper belt (£55), bag (£325)

Finding an efficient, environmentally friendly hairspray isn't easy. We tested a selection

WE KEEP being told to do our environmental bit by converting from aerosols to ozone-friendly, pump-action containers for products such as hairspray. But is the non-aerosol technology yet up to producing an efficient hairspray?

The frequent complaint with non-aerosol sprays is that the liquid is not dispersed as a fine mist over the hair, but as a sticky mess over the hands. I set out to discover whether any manufacturer had come up with a solution to the problem. I tested several pump-action sprays on my long, fine hair that has a tendency to go limp.

MICHAEL DI CESARE
Super Hold Preserving Spray
250ml: £1.75 (price per 200ml: £6.30)
An American product, recently launched in England. Available from Selfridges, Oxford Street, London, W1; and Harrods, Knightsbridge, London SW1. For mail order: Selfridges 0171-629 1234; Harrods 0171-730 1234.
VERDICT: The finest mist I have found on a non-aerosol product. It smells more like eau de cologne than hairspray. My hair looked natural and stayed in good shape all day. None of the contents escaped from the bottle on to my hands. Impressive performance.
RATING: 9/10

TREVOR SORBIE
PROFESSIONAL
Affix Hairspray
200ml: £3.59
Available from Tesco, larger branches of Boots, and from Trevor Sorbie, 10 Russell Street, London WC2B 5HZ. For mail order, or your nearest stockist, ring 0171-497 2025.
VERDICT: Stylish packaging. A very fine mist which dispersed evenly and lightly on my hair and smelt fresh. Contains sunscreen. My hair looked natural and stayed in place all day. None of the contents strayed on to my hands. Impressive performance.
RATING: 9/10

L'OREAL TECNI FIX
Firm Hold Fixing Spray
125ml: £4.05 (price per 200ml: £6.48)
Available from L'Oréal-appointed hairdressing salons nationwide. For stockists, ring 0181-466 4266.
VERDICT: A compact, handbag-sized

Green dream can come to a sticky end



Pump it up... but you may feel let down if the spray goes astray

container. Contains sunscreen. Spray released a fine mist onto my hair, without dribbling down the bottle. Very good styling power without leaving my hair looking rigid. Performed well, but expensive.
RATING: 8/10

BODY DRENCH SYSTEMS

Active Hold Hairspray
200ml: £9.95

Available from The Tanning Shop nationwide and selected professional outlets, including salons and health clubs. For stockists, ring 0171-493 0944.

VERDICT: The bottle was too big to hold comfortably with one hand, which meant the spray went in every direction but little landed on my hair. However, once I had mastered the application, this spray worked well. Hairstyle held without looking stiff or feeling sticky. At this price I wouldn't expect anything less.
RATING: 7/10

REVLON FLEX & CO

Maximum Hold Style and Shine Non-Aerosol Hairspray
200ml: £2.55

Available from larger branches of

Boots, major department stores and independent chemists nationwide.

VERDICT: A spray that doesn't disperse over a large enough area, leaving only patches of sprayed hair even when I held the container further from my head than the 10in mark on the label. The spray did, however, hold the style well throughout the day. The liquid didn't dribble down the container but, after only one application, the nozzle was covered in a sticky residue. Good performance for the price.
RATING: 6/10

FINESSE

Moisturising Hairspray Extra Hold
200ml: £2.49

Available from good chemists and department stores nationwide.

VERDICT: A good fine mist that distributed evenly on my hair. However, the nozzle started to clog up the first time I used it and had to be rinsed in warm water after every application.

I wouldn't want to have to do that every morning. My hairstyle held well for most of the day but had started to drop by late afternoon.
RATING: 5/10

NICKY CLARKE HAIROMATHERAPY

Extra Hold Styling Spray with Sunscreen
200ml: £3.15

Available from Boots, Tesco, Waitrose, John Lewis, Superdrug, Savacentre, Fenwicks, Selfridges, Lloyds chemists, Moss chemists, Harrods, Jenners, Bentalls and William Low.

VERDICT: Stylish aluminium canister which stated that this spray contained aromatherapy extracts and sunscreens. It took a lot of pump on the handle to activate the spray, which wasn't exactly a fine mist, landing in droplets. Unimpressive application made parts of my hair stiff and unnatural, but didn't touch the rest. It did hold the style, but rather more solidly than I would have liked. Some of the liquid dribbled around the top of the canister.
RATING: 3/10

BODY SALON SYSTEM

Non-Aerosol Hairspray for Firm Hold

250ml: £1.79 (price per 200ml: £1.43)

Available from selected branches of Boots nationwide.

VERDICT: The bottle felt as if it had been smothered in glue after I'd used it. The fine mist sprayed onto my hair efficiently, but also leaked out of the applicator on to my hands. My hair looked good and the style lasted well, but I had to free my fingers from the container. Not a good start to the day.
RATING: 2/10

EDMONDS AROMATHERAPY

Strong Hold Juniper and Orange High Gloss Hairspray

250ml: £3.95 (price per 200ml: £3.16)

Available from Edmonds, 40 Beauchamp Place, Knightsbridge, SW3 1XN, or through large branches of Boots nationwide. For mail order and stockists ring: 0171-589 5958.

VERDICT: I ended up with this product all over my clothes and face as the four mini-jets of liquid directed the spray everywhere, but my hair. A cumbersome, square-shaped bottle did little to help. The pleasant smell was the only saving grace.
RATING: 1/10

KAREN KAY

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HOME SWAPS: You don't have to be rich to see the world and stay in the best places, says Ray Hewinson

MICHAEL YAMASHITA

Foreign exchange deal

January in Hawaii, followed by two weeks skiing in Colorado, three weeks in France, 18 days in Amsterdam, then two months in a house overlooking the ocean in California — and it's still only November.

No, we haven't won the lottery. My wife, Sylvia, and I retired five years ago on a reasonable pension, moved down-market and paid off our mortgage. We're better off than the average pensioners — but not exactly rich.

"How, then, can you afford to travel so much?" people ask. It's simple. We seek out the best flight deals, exchange our home and car with a family abroad, and stay in what is usually a prestigious home for anything up to three months.

When we retired, we planned to visit relatives in the Antipodes. We had both worked hard throughout our careers and had no inhibitions about spending some of our savings on a five-month trip around the world. After this memorable tour we were bitten by the travel bug but realised that we could not

afford another extravaganza. Then we discovered the wonderful world of house exchange.

The slogan on the cover of the Intervac home-exchange directory read: "The book which could change your life." It was not an unreasonable claim because, within a couple of weeks of our directory entry appearing, a trickle of inquiries from would-be exchangers developed into a steady stream. One of them was an inquiry from Vancouver Island and we quickly arranged a "two-centre" exchange. We were met in Denver, Colorado, by the exchange family and driven to their house in Keystone Ranch. After a six-week stay we flew on to Seattle, took the ferry through the Orcas Islands off British Columbia and stayed in Victoria for another four weeks. It all went like a dream.

Encouraged by this success, we accepted invitations to trade with families in Torbay (a week over Easter with our grandson) and Suffolk, followed by a two-month autumn

exchange in a small southern Colorado community. We had fallen in love with this State on our first exchange and were not disappointed with the hospitality of this little cowboy town.

From the verandah of our ranch-style home we watched the deer and wild turkeys graze on the scrub and the aspens change from orange to gold and silver on the distant mountain range. Friends of the family in whose house we were staying took us to a rodeo, and we were invited out for countless meals. We were even taken on a flight in a light aircraft.

Our next adventure was a two-month exchange with two retired dentists and their wives. One couple owned a lovely home overlooking the shores of Kauai, the garden island of Hawaii, the other owned a condominium in Winter Park, a premier ski resort in Colorado. We spent a magical six weeks on the island watching the whales as we ate fresh papayas for breakfast, snorkelling off the sandy cove nearby and getting

to know the locals, who were the most friendly and generous people imaginable. We returned via the mainland, where we stopped off at Denver and skied in the Rockies. All this for the cost of the airfare and the usual living expenses (food and fuel is cheaper in America).

After two short summer exchanges in France and Amsterdam, we spent two months in an upmarket beach resort north of San Diego, California. We exchanged with a couple who live in Beverly Hills and enjoyed their holiday home in exclusive Del Mar.

During this time we visited our exchange friends in Colorado, stopping off to discuss a winter exchange with a retired professor and his wife who lived on the edge of the Arizona desert. On our return journey, we spent the night in the Beverly Hills mansion of our current exchangers, parking the four-wheel-drive Chevrolet which we had at our disposal behind the Rolls-Royce Corniche. The maid cooked us breakfast before we were driven to the airport for our homeward flight.

By this time the lady of the house had returned from her stay in our cottage and we asked her how she had adjusted to life without a pool, hot tub or maid. It obviously wasn't a problem because she told us she thought our house was "so cute" and phoned us the following week to ask if we would exchange with one of her neighbours. As Pat Boone lived across the drive and John Bloom (of the washing-machine dynasty) lived next door, we deserved judgment on that. "Aren't you taking risks allowing strangers into your home?" is the most common question. We have had a few minor breakages, and one exchanger dented the front of our car, but we took out insurance cover for such problems when we joined the scheme. The agency accepts no



Exchanges allow you to visit places you would otherwise not be able to afford, such as the island of Kauai, Hawaii

Home swaps: fact file

■ The Hewinsons book flights through Trailfinders 0171-928-3366, fax 937-9294, for long-haul journeys, or 0171-957-5400 for transatlantic flights and Europe.

■ Intervac is at 3 Orchard Court, North Wroxall, Wiltshire SN14 7AD (01258-992208). Membership £65 a year.

■ A seven-week stay in Del Mar last autumn cost the Hewinsons a total of £1,344, including Intervac membership, two return flights to Los Angeles at £402 each, allowing £105 for visits to Sea World, safari park, museums, Del Mar Zoo and wine tours, and £390 for a seven-day tour of Arizona, staying with Intervac friends and including two nights in a motel, meals and petrol.

they are seeking, preferred locations, dates and time spans. The cost of joining is modest compared with the advantages. Rates vary according to the size of the scheme. Intervac charges £65 per entry and covers 43 countries. The company publishes three directories annually, the main one in December. Before agreeing an exchange it is wise to ensure that both parties agree terms, such as payment of telephone bills, and understand what is expected of them, such as feeding the cat or mowing the lawn. It is also helpful to prepare a file with details of transport, places of interest, to visit and how to contact emergency services.

We have certainly changed our lifestyle over the past few years and have travelled beyond our wildest dreams. The children's inheritance will be a little smaller but we wouldn't have missed our adventures for anything.

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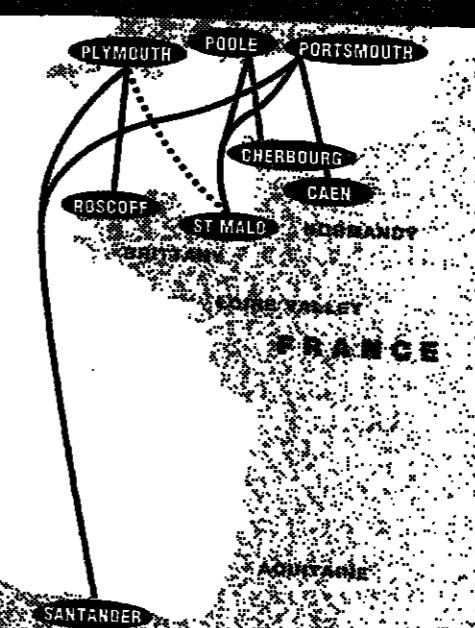
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مكتبة الأصل

TRAVEL

17

BARBADOS: Shakespeare and opera in the annual Holders Season, a highlight for visitors and locals

Hot nights of high drama

Jump up, jump up, jump up, jump up! the beat insists, subtle as a steamhammer, and it is useless to resist. Be you ever such a two-left-feeter at home, you find yourself getting up under that Caribbean sky and shaking your booty.

After a few nights, though, you long for a little diversity, music more challenging than Bob Marley's *Exodus*, Richard Strauss's *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, perhaps, some Shakespeare or even grand opera. The sort of entertainment you'd expect to find in London or New York. Of course, it's a daft idea but that, magically, is just what you will find in Barbados every year round about Easter, when the Holders Season is under way.

For no sensible reason, Johnmy and Wendy Kidd (parents of superwife Jody) got together with a friend, Richard Hanlon, and dreamed up a cultural festival: the dream became reality and what started life four years ago as a few evenings of opera extracts is now a three-week season of opera, Shakespeare, drama, recitals and cabaret, with an ambitious sporting programme as well.

Most events take place at the Kidds' family home, Holders, an old plantation house. Last year, while Britain shivered, Nichola McAuliffe, Christopher Biggins and Kit and the Widow went through the living hell of rehearsing *The Taming of the Shrew* in the sun-bathed garden, with only a swimming pool at hand.

Infinity is the keynote of the Holders Season. On the first night of *Madam Butterfly*, where the Wren Orchestra competed with whistling tree frogs (pitched somewhere between B and D) in the natural amphitheatre of the Holders garden, the audience sat on plastic chairs ranged on the grass in the shade of towering mahogany and flamboyant trees. And while some designer frocks and serious rocks

Garden rehearsals for *The Taming of the Shrew*

were on show, there were plenty of shorts and sandals, and the High Commissioner was wearing a green spotted shirt borrowed from his son.

From the start, everyone was determined to keep this a festival for Barbados, and although visitors outnumbered those elsewhere at the cabaret acts held in various ritzy hotels in the west-coast parishes of St James's and St Peter's, the majority of the audiences are Bajan. Since Bajan English has retained some of the cadences, lift and colour of Elizabethan, Shakespeare's language presents little obstacle and I saw near

some children who were open-mouthed with pleasure at Kate's antics as Petruchio tames her spirit by starvation. Its thespes by night but during the day sport comes to the fore. Last year's celebrity golf tournament saw Geoffrey Boycott and Nigel Mansell competing on the Royal Westmoreland's world-class course and, if you didn't fancy the polo, you could have climbed up to the diminutive Holders

Hill pitch where the fast bowlers have to cross the road and keep an eye out for oncoming traffic before taking a run up. Rather Heath Robinson you might think, but the 1996 match, free to anyone who cared to turn up, saw the Holders Village team pitted against an eleven flown in by John Paul Getty.

It's all thoroughly laid back,

unless you're running the season. Richard Hanlon, executive producer, told me he'd slept for three days at the end of last season. Fortunately, all that's forgotten now, and the fourth season is looming.

Nichola McAuliffe returns to star in *Twelfth Night*, Christopher Biggins will direct *Tosca* and *The Mikado*, and the finale will be a tribute to George Gershwin.

Relaxed it may be, but it's

also very *Hello!*-ish. At last

year's opening gala I spotted

Claudette Colber, 90-odd and

still recognisably the sassy

heiress who had Clark Gable

smitten in *It Happened One*



Long lazy days on the beach can be followed by evenings of festival entertainment of the sort you'd find in London

Night all those years ago. Lesley Joseph, from *Birds of a Feather*, had rented a beach house, and Nicholas Parsons arrived to get married, a quiet affair with a few close acquaintances and the photographers from, yes, *Hello!*.

Despite the glam names, there is an undiscovered low-key charm about the Holders Season at present but if, as rumour has it, Signor Pavarotti puts in an appearance in 1997, it will never be the same again. Better put your towel on the beach now, before the crowds arrive.

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The 11 day Sri Lankan Experience combines both the rich cultural heritage and the exotic wildlife and vegetation of this beautiful island. From Colombo you head into the hills to Kandy, capital of the last Sinhalese Kingdom. Visiting the Pinnewala Elephant Orphanage, set up to save abandoned wild elephants, you continue to Nuwara Eliya, the favourite hill station of the British. For the more adventurous, from Dickoya, there is a chance to climb Adam's Peak where you can enjoy a breathtaking sunrise. A short jungle odyssey includes a

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Itinerary at a Glance

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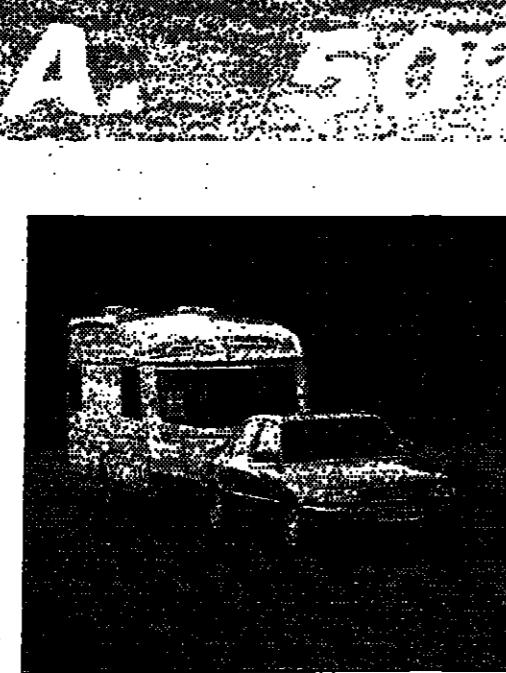
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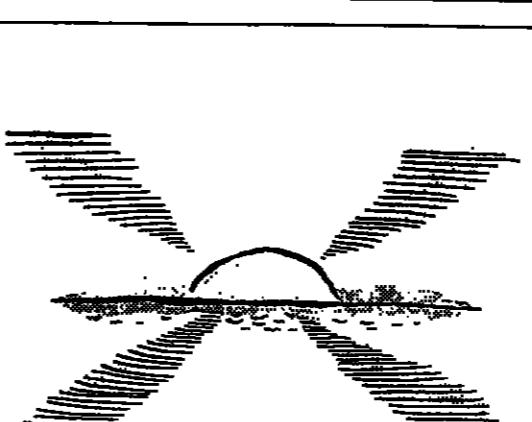
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EGYPT: The newly opened tomb of Queen Nefertari near Luxor is claimed to be the most beautiful of all



Part of one of the many exquisite murals in Nefertari's tomb in the Valley of the Queens

Secrets of a favoured wife

A "new" tomb sounds like a contradiction in terms when it is in the Valley of the Queens, but that is the simplest way to describe Egypt's latest tourist attraction, and provides an excellent reason for a return trip, or an added incentive for a first one.

More than 90 years after its discovery, Queen Nefertari's tomb has been opened to the public for the first time. New is the wrong word for what was intended to be the last resting place of Rameses II's favourite wife, cut into a hillside about 3,200 years ago, but the astonishing thing is that the colours of the murals are as bright and rich as if they had just been painted.

You cannot just wander in on a whim, or expect to be

herded through as part of a package tour, but if you make the effort to be one of only 150 visitors allowed in each day, you will be rewarded with an unforgettable sight.

The tomb was discovered in 1904 by the Italian Ernesto Schiaparelli and is one of 80 found in the Valley of the Queens. Most are uninscribed. Nefertari's, one of only four open to visitors at the moment, is revealed to be overwhelmingly beautiful and gorgeously decorated — the best in Egypt some people say.

When it was found, the painted stucco relief was badly damaged by salt and water, the queen's mummy was destroyed and her treasures long plundered. Now, after meticulous restoration work, largely

provided by the Getty Conservation Institute of California, the salt encrustations have been removed and the slipping stucco invisibly refixed with slivers of bark from the Japanese mulberry tree.

A first staircase leads down to the hall and the start of the treasure trove of wall paintings. The vision that greeted our party was almost too much to take in and, at first, disconcertingly perfect. Apart from one blank wall to the left as you enter the hall, where the most badly damaged reliefs had fallen to bits, every inch of the 520 square yards apart from the new wood floor, is decorated.

Through the corridors and pillared halls, a life-size Nefertari is shown in numerous scenes, before different gods of the underworld beside her own at Abu Simbel.

Nefertari, who was reputed

to be a great beauty (her name means "beautiful lady"), is shown on her tomb walls to be tall and slim, elegant in a long white dress with a simple sash, as with perfect posture she makes her offerings to the gods or plays a game of draughts. The craftsmanship is particularly fine, and unusual in that shading was used to give her face form.

We had, by chance, picked a quiet time for our visit, at 11am on a Saturday morning. Our tour was unheralded, and there were only a handful of other similarly awestruck visitors in welcome contrast to the noisy, jostling groups in the other tombs. I was touched at the genuine pride of the attendants, who, far from being blasé after a lifetime of tomb-sitting, eagerly pointed out hidden features.

Contrary to reports just before the tomb opened last November, visitors were not made to wear face masks to preserve the walls from the moisture of their breath, or to shuffle about in shoe covers. We were allowed to walk through the 30-yard long tomb without so much as a buffer of glass panels or guard rails. Its guardians are satisfied that the relatively small numbers passing through are no danger to the relics.

There is talk of building a replica tomb

next door to accommodate coach parties, and, although there are no definite plans so far, a visit to the real tomb, sooner rather than later, seems a wise precaution.

Although the high entrance price — £100 (about £20), which is ten to 20 times higher than for other tombs — has

reduced the number of visitors, Nefertari's last resting place is still popular. For the best chance of getting in you need a flexible itinerary which includes a stay in Luxor. A Nile cruise with a tight schedule is not suitable — though not impossible if you are bold enough to jump ship and prepared to miss out on a "must see", such as El-Karnak, because tickets have to be bought on the day, and no tour operator can guarantee you one. It is best to go it alone.

The ticket office is on the west bank of the Nile just behind the Colossi of Memnon, and is open 8am-noon and 1-4pm. You should aim to be there by 7.30am. If you go later and are not able to get a ticket, you can take the opportunity to examine the Colossi.

The Ramasseum

round the corner, any other sites you have not yet seen.

From your hotel in Luxor, walk or take a taxi to the tourist ferry in front of the Emp Hotel. The first ferry leaves at 8am and the crossing takes ten minutes.

On the other side of the river, taxis will be waiting to

run you up to the ticket kiosk and on to the Valley of the Queens, wait however long you need, and then return you to the ferry. Before getting into the taxi, however, negotiate the hire charge, not per person, of £20 (about £4), bearing in mind that the driver will expect to receive £25 including *baksheesh*.

Tickets for the other tombs, and temples on the west bank can be bought from the kiosk next to the ferry before you engage the taxi.

Queen Nefertari's tomb is this year's hot ticket, the one everyone will ask you about when you get home. There's no doubt that its exclusivity adds to its touristic kudos.

And, perhaps, part of the excitement and satisfaction comes from winning the obstacle race to get in. Whatever the reason, it is truly a gem.

• Murals are as bright and rich as if just painted •

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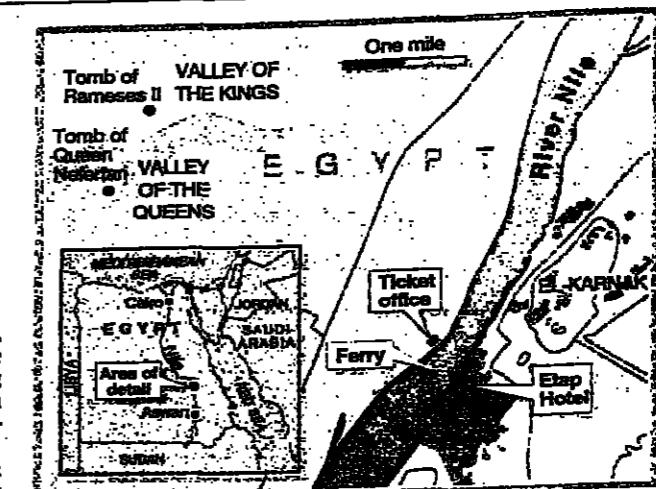
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CAROLINE HENDRIE

• The author was a guest of Somak Holidays (0181-423 3000), which offers a seven-night Nile cruise aboard the Osiris from £399, including flights from Gatwick, transfers and full board. The same cruise followed by seven nights' B&B at the Hilton Luxor costs from £544.



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TRAVEL 19

EUROPE: For £275, the Inter-Rail opens the borders to 26 countries for a month

Jump aboard the freedom train

It was raining in Berlin, so we went to Bergen. There aren't many holidays where you can afford to change your plans so easily on a whim — or a curse of the weather. But this was one.

We were Inter-Railing and, £275 a head, we had the choice of Europe — the choice to explore more than dozen countries, and to experience a kaleidoscope of cultures for a month. And at a kaleidoscope,

luroscopists need have no fear: there is no danger of a bad Europe. Anyone who is threatened by such a concept should take an Inter-Rail trip to experience the differences for themselves.

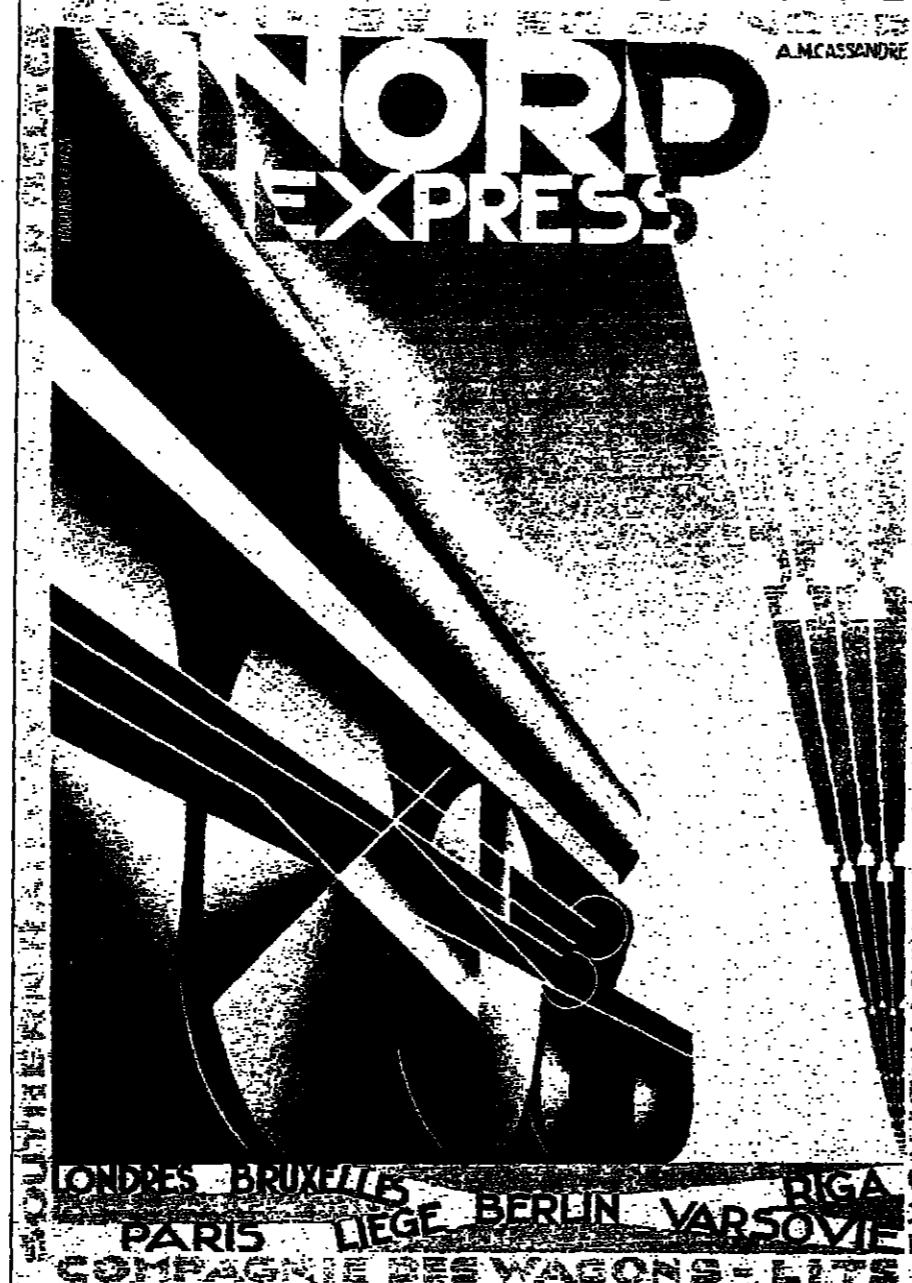
Even the railway stations are different: only in Paris is there be the ornate, ceiling and turn-of-the-century luxury of the station restaurant at the Gare de l'Est; and only in the former Berlin Hauptbahnhof is there be a queue, patrolled by guards, to enter a supermarket which has pick-cabbage as its main product.

The ever-changing nationalities, trains, tastes and cultures of Europeans can be experienced from a railway viaduct.

In Norway passengers are served ice-cream on the journeys from Oslo to Bergen and train travels over spectacular mountain passes where the views even in the summer. Switzerland the immaculate carriages and the manicured countryside make you like a passenger on a toy in a network; in Hungary the coaches to main stations are littered with the carcasses of rusting steam locomotives. The Inter-Rail scheme is a well-established idea. An all-inclusive "global" ticket, costing £15 and valid for one month, is the holder unrestricted second-class rail travel throughout the 26 participating European countries. Last year, for the first time, Europe is divided into five zones; a set for 15 days of travel in one zone costs £185, or £220 for month in two zones. In addition, tickets are now available to those over 26, although the prices are higher and the ticket is valid only for Northern and Eastern Europe (15 days, £215; one month, £275). It was some time before we realised that the retired history teacher from the West Coast of Ireland, whom we had met late at night on

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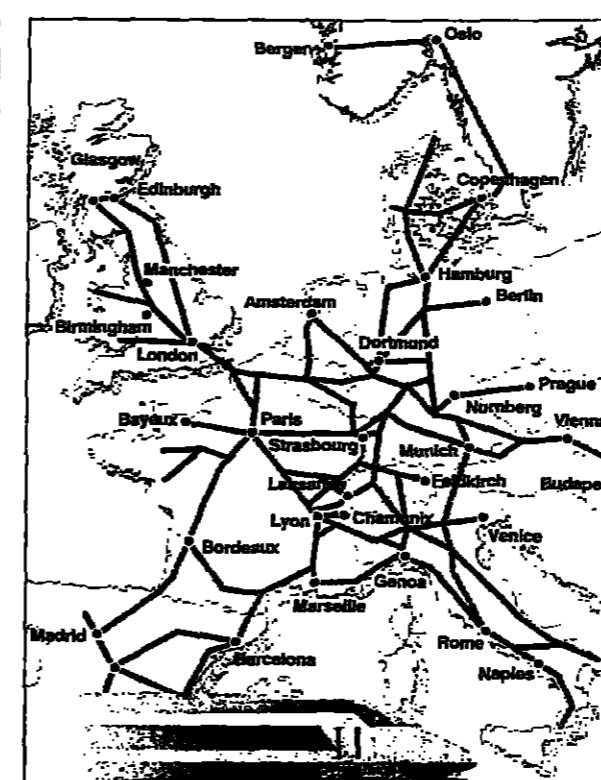


Making tracks — but don't forget the Thomas Cook European Rail Timetable

Copenhagen station, was on the same holiday as ourselves. There are a few drawbacks to the Inter-Rail ticket. Within the United Kingdom you get only 30 per cent off rail journeys and a 50 per cent reduction on most ferry routes to the Continent. Indeed, most guides to travelling with an

Inter-Rail ticket suggest that it is cheaper to travel by ferry or by coach rather than train.

In addition to this, throughout Europe various extra reservations and supplements are payable on inter-city services. The wise traveller soon learns to check these out and to pay



Inter-Rail pass and zones

Information and booking: the International Rail Centre at Victoria station, London, or phone 0171-834 2345. Credit card bookings can be made on 0171-828 0892.

Prices: One zone for 15 days, £185; Two zones for one month, £220; Any three zones for one month, £245; All zones for one month, £275. For £5, the centre will help to plan an itinerary.

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- A: Republic of Ireland.
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- C: Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Denmark.
- D: Czech and Slovak republics, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia.
- E: France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Luxembourg.
- F: Spain, Portugal, Morocco.
- G: Italy, Greece, Turkey, Slovakia. Includes AND/HML ferry services between Brindisi (Italy) and Patras (Greece).

any extra at the railway station before departure — it is less hassle and cheaper.

The key to making the most of the Inter-Rail ticket is using the enormous flexibility it allows. We had planned to visit Budapest for a couple of nights only, but discovered that on Day 10 a day you can five like a king, so we spent a few afternoons in pampered luxury at the thermal sulphur baths of the Hotel Gellert, and stayed for the national celebrations of St Stephen's day.

Your interests can shape the holiday; of all the people we met, Inter-Railing, not one had the same route or set of places to visit as ourselves. We went to Bayeux to see the tapestry; to Chamonix for some mountain walking; to Lausanne to visit the museum of the Olympic movement; and to Feldkirch because we had changed some money into Austrian shillings before we left England. Then we visited Budapest and Prague, before going to Germany to spend the weekend with some friends who work near Nuremberg.

After this, we went to Berlin, where we were just in time to see the remains of Checkpoint Charlie, surrounded by crushed fragments of the Berlin Wall, before the area is redeveloped. We finished our month by visiting Scandinavia, which, contrary to its reputation of being expensive, proved to be one of the cheapest countries on our itinerary. This is mainly due to the fact that Norwegian law permits wild camping on any site that is more than 150 metres away from a building. The Inter-Rail centre at Copenhagen and Oslo stations (funded by the state-owned rail companies which want to encourage tourism) are worth visiting; at the very least they provide an opportunity for a cheap and much-needed shower.

There is only one item that is indispensable on an Inter-Rail tour, the Thomas Cook European Rail Timetable. Read it carefully, and pay special attention to the footnotes; a quick glance which ignored these led us to spend a night outside Oslo station with gentle drizzle for company.

To travel Europe by train is an incomparable experience; it allows you to visit old friends and to make new ones; to see places most only read of in newspapers or history books. It definitely shows that whatever the politicians of the present or future decide, people in Europe may live with each other in friendship, but the differences between them will survive.

The hungry Inter-Rail traveller can taste those differences at every cafe and railway station visited — even when the meals are the least expensive. There is a world of difference between the bread and cheese of France, washed down with a glass of wine, and the bread and fish of Norway, fresh from the market on the docksides at Bergen.

But the appetite that is really whetted is the appetite for travel. At the very least, a month spent travelling Europe by Inter-Rail provides you with enough trailers for future holidays to last you the rest of your life.

MATTHEW BRYANT

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 25

TEICHOPSIS

A term coined by Dr Hubert Airy, son of the Astronomer Royal, and first published in the *Transactions of the Royal Society*, 1787. It describes the aura (warning) of a migraine attack — the flashing zigzag lines the hallucination slowly enlarging, often with a scotoma (aura of blindness) in the centre, all of 5 to 60 (average 30) minute duration.

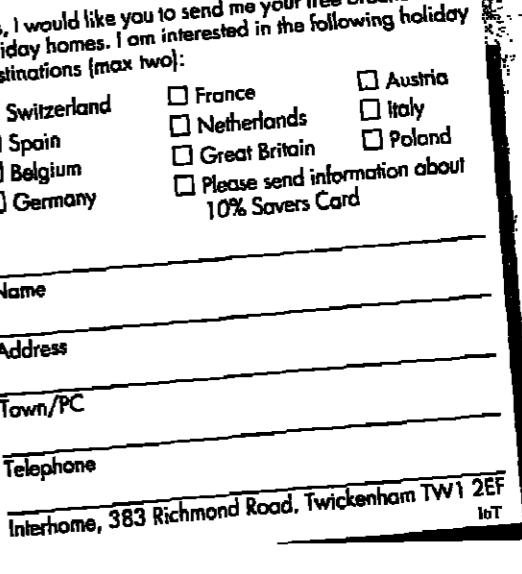
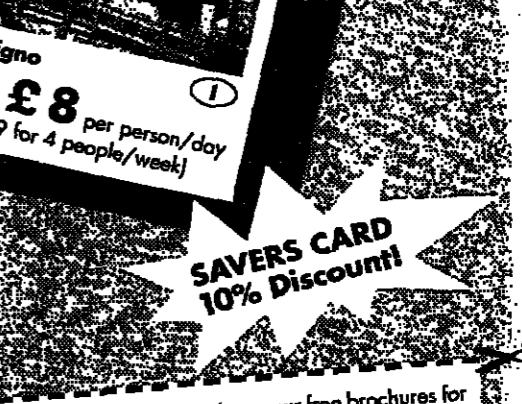
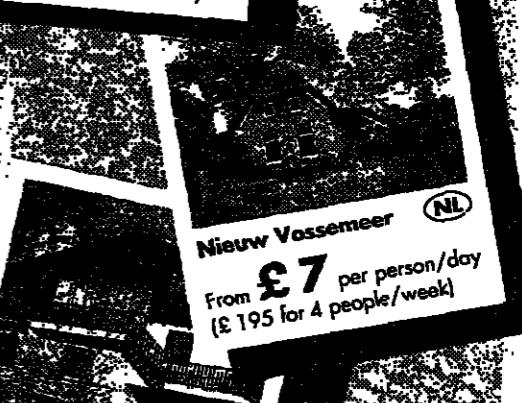
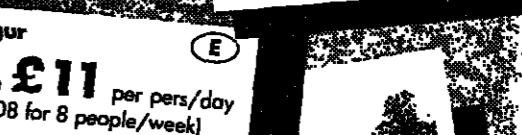
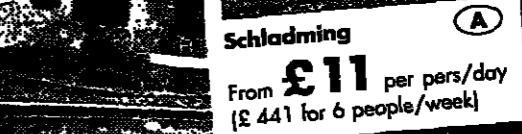
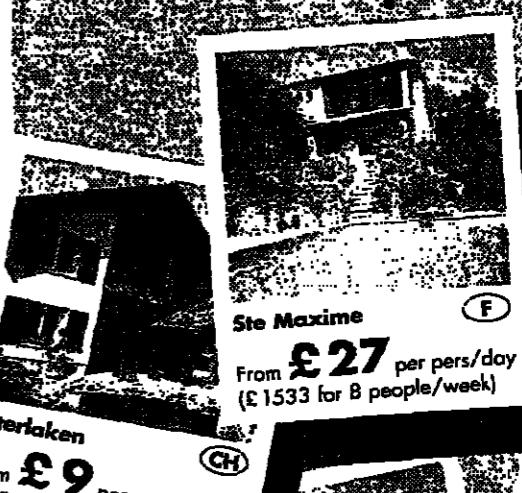
EMPERORS CHAMBERMAID

(c) The 14th King's Hussars, now the 14th/20th King's Hussars, a famous English cavalry regiment trained in the hunting field. At the Battle of Vitoria, 1813, they captured Joseph Bonaparte's chamber and retained his silver chamber-pot as a souvenir.

COCKPIT OF EUROPE

(a) By the accidents of history, geography and folly, the muddy place now called Belgium has seen more squawking and fighting than anywhere else in the world. Forget the Romans, it has been the stage for the battles of Ramillies (1706), Fontenoy (1745), Jemappes (1792), Ligny, Quatre Bras and Waterloo (1815), Mons, Ypres and much other barbed wire, bombs and blood (1914-18).

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Damascus to Palmyra

Syria has never been an easy place to visit, and often in the past involving multiple border crossings from neighbouring countries causing delay and a reduction in the amount of actual exploration time. Since the ideal time to visit is between September and May and that the best starting point is Damascus, we shall be operating a short flight service from London Gatwick direct to Damascus during this period. Needless to say, this also considerably reduces the cost.

This is a wonderful opportunity to visit Syria, one of the world's most fascinating countries. We reach Damascus in the evening and spend the first night in the old living city in the world and the Islamic capital under the Ottomans. Here, the stories of the Bible come magically to life, irrespective of your religious beliefs. We will see the chapel commemorating the lowering down of St Paul from a window.

Palmyra is a very special place - the city has colonnades, streets and monumental arches; but perhaps most well known for the Colosseum.

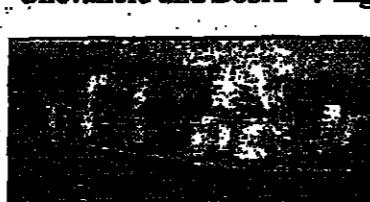
Aleppo is the largest medieval citadel in the world and a fine example of Arab military architecture. There are some fine examples of Romanesque to explore, each lively street specialising in its own trade. Another fascination of this city is the beautifully preserved inhabited historical homes many with archaeological finds that can take one back in time with their gracious style and untouched quality. From Aleppo we will be visiting the 10th-century Church of St Simeon the Stylite who positioned himself atop a 16-metre pillar for 40 years.

A visit will also be made to Ebla where 16,000 clay tablets dating back to 2250 BC reveal a lost Crusader history holding special fascination for many and the visit to the Crusader Knights' Hospital will not disappoint.

Finally, Bosra contains the most unique Roman theatre anywhere. The Ayubids (Saladin's Dynasty) incorporated it into a 12th-century castle. The city is also Roman in its



visiting Damascus, Maaloula, Palmyra, Aleppo, Ebla, Ugarit, Horns, Crac des Chevaliers and Bosra - 7 nights from £595.00



with Monarch Airlines (Airbus 310) to Damascus. On arrival transfer to the Al-Faradis Hotel for one night stay.

Day 2 Tour of Damascus including Omayad Mosque, the National Museum, Saladin's tomb and the old city. Drive to nearby Maaloula for an overnight stay.

Single £165.00
Price includes air travel, transfers and road transportation, accommodation on a half-board, sightseeing, local representatives/vegtables, most food and travel insurance, airport taxes, tips, porters and entrance fees. All prices are subject to change.

Important Note: The sequential order of the tour may sometimes be changed in order to avoid congestion at the sites.

Day 5 Morning excursion from Aleppo to the 5th-century church of St Simeon the Stylite. Return to Aleppo and

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TRAVEL

SKIING: Why it makes sense to hire an approved mountain guide; plus last-minute bargain breaks

Follow the leader to the best of the snow

The high-season crowds on piste make off-piste powder even more inviting. But after forking out for a lift pass and holiday package, many British skiers consider guides to be an unnecessary expense.

Wrong. This is one of the most dangerous seasons for snow security in years. And even early-intermediate skiers are now demanding access to erstwhile black runs, many now reclassified as "itineraries" or "off piste" by resorts unwilling to accept patrol responsibilities. The mountain guide has replaced the ski teacher as an essential holiday "extra". A day's off-piste skiing with a guide should cost around £100-£150 for a group of three to four people.

Tour operators have been quick to spot the trend. Specialised weeks dedicated to teaching beginners how to ski in deep snow now lead on to trans-alpine ski safaris. The future is wide body skis, inevitably dubbed "fat boys".

I have seen Verbier and Val d'Isère tracked out in hours by skiers on fat boys who wouldn't go near a couloir on

their more difficult to negotiate normal skis. With 150 skiers killed in avalanches every winter, certified mountain guides make sense.

Skiing with a guide adds immeasurable value to a holiday. In Andermatt, Alex Clapasson took me down narrow chutes suffused with snow at a time when most of the mountain was sheet ice and crust. Over in Val d'Isère Patrick Zimmer led us past cement-thick snow around the Espace Killy to sheltered areas of loose powder.

Skiing the best snow on the mountain is enhanced by knowing just how indifferent the snow is in other sectors. Skiing powder down a "hidden" valley while your friends are standing in a lift queue on piste is the ultimate convincer.

There are few personal relationships more important than guide and client. Swiss guides, in Zermatt in particular, have a reputation for being haughty. I would ski any time with Jean-Marie Ollant (00 33 50 63 00 88) of the Compagnie des Guides in Chamonix; Ueli Frei (00 41 36 53 13 52) in Grindelwald;



Ueli Frei, a guide in Grindelwald, takes a break after a gruelling morning run with the author

Alex Clapasson (00 41 44 67 770) in Andermatt; Patrick Zimmer (00 33 79 06 14 80) in Val d'Isère; Roland Steiger (00 33 50 54 43 53) in Chamonix or Hans Sohnssen (00 41 26 31 70 85) in Verbier.

Powder Byrne (0181-871 3300) has the best off-piste

guides and the best intro programmes I've experienced. Mountain Reality (00 41 44 67 770) has the most ambitious range of ski safaris, skiing from hotel to hotel across Italy and Switzerland. Loyal fans of guide John Hogg, now back in Canada, should note that

Mountain Reality now handles all Hogg's safari routes. Both The Ski Company (0171-730 9600) and Collineige (01276 242662) have holidays where local guides accompany skiers on a weekly basis.

DOUG SAGER

Great white holiday deals

THERE is still time to get a good discount on your skiing holiday if you book now before the school half-term rush in mid-February.

Some of the best deals are in the big resorts in France and Switzerland. At the time of going to press the following deals are on offer: Mark Warner (0171-393 3131) has a week in its chalet hotel in Verbier for £299, £216 off the brochure price. Bladon Lines (0181-780 8800) quoted £299 for a week in Tignes, a discount of £170. Snowtime (0171-433 3336) had space in its chalet hotel in Méribel for £299, less than half the brochure price. Chalet holidays typically include flights and coach transfers, breakfast, afternoon tea, dinner and ski guiding.

For rock-bottom prices try Crystal (0181-399 5144), which quoted self-catering apartments at £199 per person, including flight and transfers, and catered chalet holidays at £259 in France. That's as long you don't mind where you go; guaranteeing the resort of your choice costs an extra £40. Upmarket, Ski Scott Dunn



Big resorts in France and Switzerland offer good deals

(0181-767 0202) quoted £599 (down from £565) for a luxury chalet in Zermatt, including tea or coffee in bed, canapés before dinner, champagne and a picnic on the slopes. Simply Ski (0181-742 2541) is offering the luxury Chalet Norjeanne in Verbier at £389, almost half price. If time is limited, Powder Byrne (0181-871 3300) could do a weekend at Hotel Hirschen in Grindelwald half board for £449, from

February 1-4, travelling Swissair with minibus transfers.

Italy and North America have been selling well, so bargains there are few and far between. If you haven't got time to call around, a specialist ski travel agency such as Ski Solutions (0171-602 9900) can do the legwork.

MARITA VAN OLDENBORGH

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SAVING

GAMES

25

CHESS

by Raymond Keene

I AM often asked what is the best way to improve once the elementary stage has been passed in chess. One of the best methods is to pick a hero and study that player's games in some depth — or even write an article or book about that person! The Soviet expert Alexander Kotov freely admitted that his study of Alekhine, leading to a two-volume work on his hero's games, had been instrumental in transforming him from a first-category player into a grandmaster. Similarly, Harry Golombek, *The Times* chess correspondent from 1945 to 1985, honed his skills by a deep study of both Capablanca and Reti. Again in Golombek's case this ultimately led to chess biographies of both players, with deep comments on their outstanding masterpieces. In my own case, in 1973, I conducted an in-depth study of the games of Aron Nimzowitsch, and I secured my first grandmaster result the following year.

If you are an attacking player, choose Alekhine, Kasparov or Tal to emulate. If more strategically inclined, go for Botvinnik, Capablanca or Petrosian. Choosing a living player, such as Karpov (a noted strategist) brings the advantage of a stream of fresh games to inspire you.

The American master Eric Schiller has recently started to follow the games of that great attacker Rudolf Spielmann, and the effect on his style and strength has been extraordinary. Here is a sample, played under the influence of Spielmann.

W: E Schiller; B: M Arne
Foster City, 1995
Ray Lopez

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6
3 Bb5 b5 4 Bb4 Nf6
5 Qe2 b5 6 Bb3 Bc5
7 c3 0-0 8 0-0 d6

This is probably not necessary as Black's bishop is heading for b7, but White wanted to make sure that it was kept away from g4, where the pin on the knight would weaken White's control of d4.

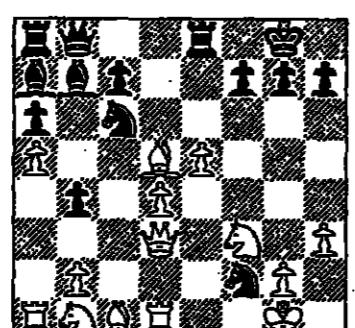
9 ... Bb7 10 Rd1 Bb8
11 Bb4 12 Bb5 Bb8

In retrospect, this is an error. The simple 12... Qe7 would have given Black an equal game.

13 d4 exd4 14 cxd4 Ba7. 14...

Rxe4 was playable, but White felt that he would then have sufficient compensation after 15 Be3 Ba7 16 Qd3. However, after 14 ... Rxe4 White must avoid 15 Bxf7+ Kxf7 16 Ng5+ Kb7 17 Nxe4 Nxd4 when Black has the advantage.

15 a5 d5 16 Qd3 Nc6
17 Bxd5 Nxd5



The idea is that if White captures the knight the pin on d4 allows captures at e5 with counterplay. For example 18 Kxf7 Nxe5 19 Nxe5 Bxd5 20 Bxe5 c5, when Black is a piece down but White's position is unstable. Instead, White launches a sacrificial attack, one virtually impervious to precise analysis, quite in the style of Spielmann himself.

18 Bxf7+ Kxf7 19 Qf5+ Kg8
20 Ng5+ Kb7 21 Qxf7+ Kd8
22 Qh8+ Kd7 23 Qxg7+ Kc8
24 Nf7+ Kd7

The position looks very good for White, but it is not so simple.

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27 Qh5+ Kd7 28 Nd2+ Kd8
29 Qg5+ Kd7

White now closes the mating net with a problem-like move: 30 Ngf3+ Ke3 31 Kf1.

Black resigns.

A quiet king move ends the spectacular combination.

By Raymond Keene
This position is from the game Heinicke — Wustenhofer, Germany 1926. Black is threatening to launch a counter-attack against the white king with rook check on the back rank. Nevertheless, it is White to move and he made the most of this. Can you see how? White to move.

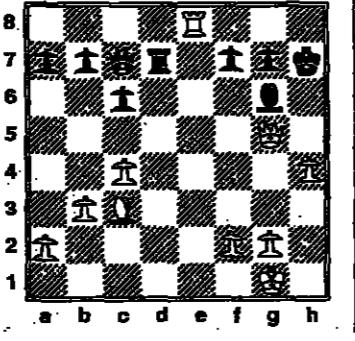
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Last week's winners: D Timbrell, Chingford, Essex; C Kennedy, Canterbury, Kent; D L Shapiro, Harrow, Middlesex.



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The restored
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of a price

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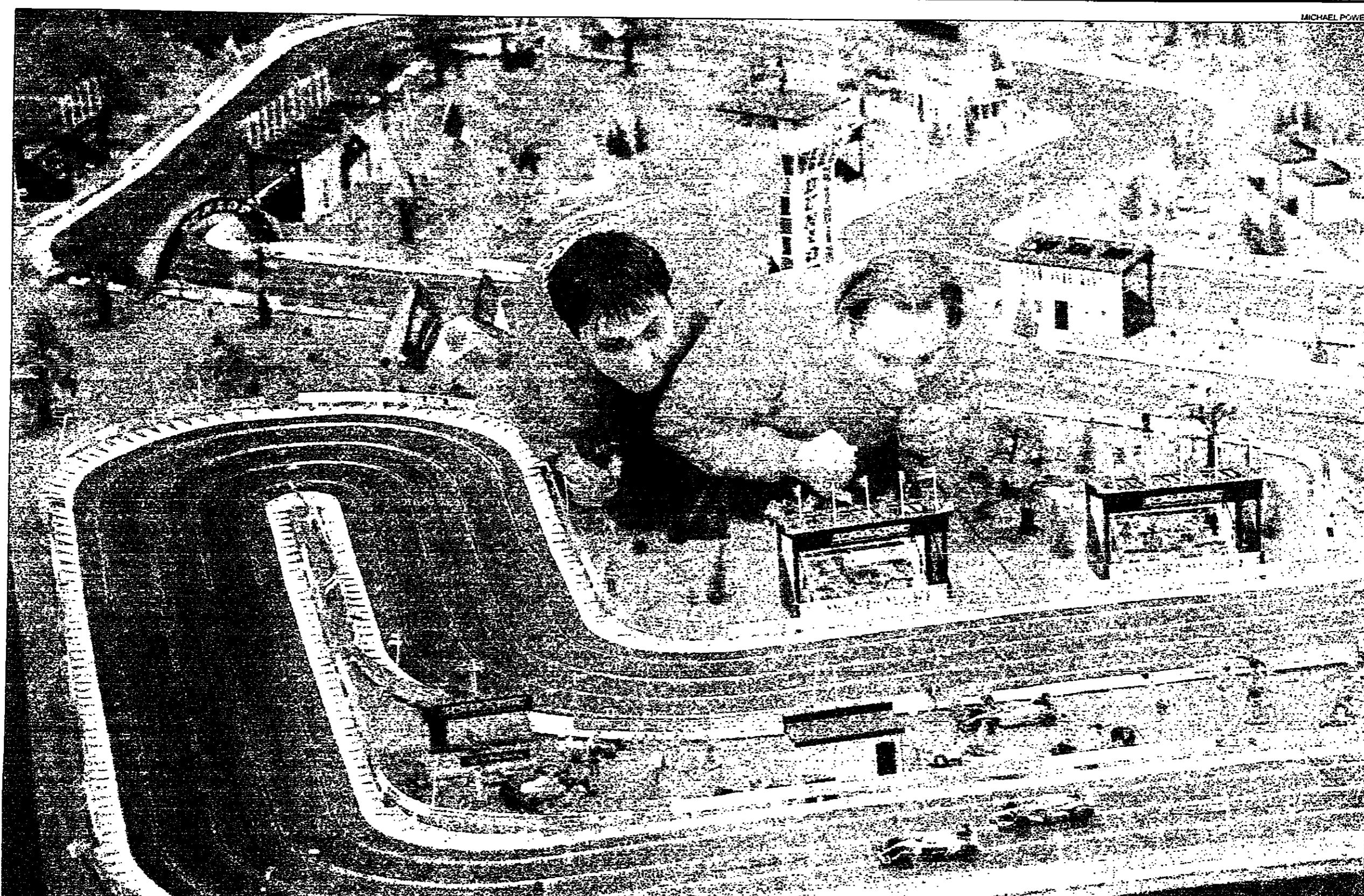


Century of
the signs
that paint
the road
to hell

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SATURDAY JANUARY 27 1996



Small is fascinating: Graham Stevens, left, and Paul Smith on four-lane super circuit at Scalextric's Margate headquarters, complete with pits, grandstands, bridges, and loudspeakers playing the screaming engine whine of F1 cars

A different scale of motoring delights

Junior is barely out of nappies when the feverish search through the toy shop starts. The buggy is neatly parked against a stack of shelves with row-on-row of boxes decorated with chequered flags and screaming Formula One cars while the investigation is carried out.

At this stage, it is difficult to spot the child. Actually, Junior is the one who cannot even say "car", let alone operate one, while the real child is the taller one rifling through the boxes. Never mind early learning toys and pop-up books, what Junior really needs apparently is a Scalextric... yet he barely gets to lay his dumpy little fist on the controls in case he breaks anything.

I confess: I was that man. My son was still learning to walk when his first Scalextric appeared under the Christmas tree, and he had to beat me off for the privilege of unwrapping it. Then he stood by while it was constructed and took it all in his stride when Dad punched the air after thrashing him in a ten-lap sprint. There are boxes of track and cars, from Ford Escort rally cars to Formula One machines, in our garage just waiting for a new circuit to be constructed by an eager father with delusions of being team manager for Renault Williams at Silverstone.

Before their infant sons can even say the word, fathers dash out to buy them their first cars.

Kevin Eason on the enduring joys of Scalextric

But there is no need to send for medical help, for I am not alone. Scalextric is the ultimate toy for boys who never grew up. There cannot be a male under the age of 45 in this country who at some time has not owned one, and even the mention of one of the world's most famous brand names turns eyes misty and leads to confessions that somehow that set bought years ago was never thrown away.

Even the countenance of Mike Powell, a hardened professional who took these pictures for *Car 96*, took on a faraway look as he reflected on his Grand Prix Scalextric set, featuring his favourite Jaguar XJ220, that roars around his London flat.

Simon Kohler, marketing manager at Hornby Hobbies which makes Scalextric, listened patiently to the wistful reminiscences of Messrs Powell and Eason and their victories on the small scale track without the least surprise. At the Toy Fair this weekend at London's Olympia, he will meet

Williams around the familiar rubberised track for glory, and — for the very best — a place in a world final in Trinidad.

Not exactly one of the better known grand prix venues, you might think, but there is a reason for choosing the Caribbean island, apart from the sun and sand. Trinidad is the home of the greatest concentration of Scalextric enthusiasts in the world, where the small scale racing is second only to cricket as a sporting pursuit. Trinidadian children were introduced to the table-top track in much the same way as table tennis was the amusement for a generation in youth clubs here — except that in Britain, we outran capuccinos, Cliff Richard and paddle bats, while in Trinidad Scalextric stuck, creating an island of addicts.

The addiction started in the days when the cars racing along the electrified steel grooves were copies of F1 machines like Cooper, Ferrari and Lotus and the heroic drivers were Jim Clark, Graham Hill and Mike Hawthorn.

We all have a Mr B. Francis to thank

for our addiction. He started a company in 1952 called Minimodels, making

Continued overleaf

LIKE THE REAL THING, IT'S DONE WITH COMPUTERS



Jamie Buchanan, designer for lounge motor racing

THE eerie computer shape was a Vauxhall Calibra twisting and turning through a full circle to show each curve and detail of its aerodynamic body.

But when this car leaves the electronic drawing board, it will be small enough to fit inside a jacket pocket. Although Scalextric cars are toys, they are designed with the same attention to detail as the real thing.

In scale, they race around the track at speeds equivalent to 200mph, tear through corners and chicanes and stop on a sixpence. They also have to cope with stresses and strains that real cars do not — such as when Junior loses control and his car tumbles off the track and the dining room table, plunging to the floor.

Until recently, the process

was traditional model-making, with drawings translated to patterns, then to clay or wooden moulds before moulds could be made for plastic prototypes, the factory toolled up and the cars produced, 18 months from concept to completion.

Now Scalextric designs on computer software used by manufacturers of full-size cars, completing the design process in a month. Jamie Buchanan is one of the designers who "draws" cars on computer screen, examining their contours and areas that Scalextric has to strengthen against the rigours of lounge racing.

Scalextric cars tend to sit higher than road cars to deal with banked corners, have wider wheel arches and thicker bumpers to withstand those prangs against the dining table legs.

Forget when it was built. Consider who built it.



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Planning to see a show or a film, an exhibition or a concert? *The Times* critics select the best entertainment

Benedict Nightingale

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Read Wilde's play, and you might conclude it is a melodrama with epigrams artificially inserted in the creakier gaps. But Peter Hall's production is a major piece of dramatic reclamation. With Anna Carteret, David Yelland, Penny Downie and (especially) a Wilde-looking Martin Shaw seamlessly in control, there is humanity, humour and timely truth in the tale of the rising politician threatened both by the appearance of the indiscreet letter he wrote in his youth and by his wife's unforgiving morality. *Theatre Royal, Haymarket, London SW1 (0171-930 8800). Evenings: Mon to Sat, 7.45pm; matinees: Wed and Sat, 3pm. £5.*

AN INSPECTOR CALLS Why has a revival of a neatly carpeted thriller written 50 years ago and earnestly preaching socialism won almost every award in London, as well as several in New York? Why bother at all with J.B. Priestley's tale of a respectable family's destruction of an innocent girl? Because Stephen Daldry's superbly imaginative direction and Ian MacNeil's wonderfully evocative set transform it into a grand, gripping denunciation of the 20th-century's deadliest sins. *Garrick, Charing Cross Road, London WC2 (0171-494 5025). Evenings: Mon to Fri, 7.45pm; matinees: Sat, 8.15pm; matinees: Wed, 2.30pm, Sat, 5pm.*

Clive Davis

JACKY TERRASSON His eponymous Blue Note debut found a place in many of the shortlists as the critics looked back on the outstanding records of 1995. A packish virtuoso of Franco-American origin, he has the potential to become the most versatile and accomplished pianist since the controversial Keith Jarrett. Muscular yet poetic, he can slip into a funky backbeat on *I Love Paris*, sprinkle Debussy-esque harmonies on *Hommage à Lili Boulanger* and leap into quicksilver Bud Powell mode at a moment's notice. *Jazz Café, Parkway, London NW1 (0171-344 0044), Thur Feb 1, 9pm.*

BARBARA COOK/STEVE ROSS Barbara Cook's waltz through Broadway and Tin Pan Alley history is currently one of London's best kept secrets. Do not miss her final week. Wally Harper's piano arrangements are as sumptuous as a full orchestra's, and Cook's subtle vocals lift even the more obscure numbers firmly into the major league. A favourite at the Algonquin and other Manhattan salons, the Cole Porter devotee Steve Ross comes to town with another outstanding sack of vintage songs. He will be followed on-stage, later in the evening, by Patricia Hodge and Sheridan Morley, presenting their tribute to Gertrude Lawrence and Jack Buchanan. *Cook's Cafè Royal, Regent St, London W1 (0171-437 9000), tonight, Tues to Sat, 9.15pm.*

RE: Pizza on the Park Knightsbridge, London SW1 (0171-235 5273). Mon 29 to Sat 24 Feb, 9.15pm; (Hodge and Morley, 11.15pm).

Rodney Milnes

SAMSON ET DALILA There is a slightly improvised feel to the Royal Opera's new year programme, with the management bobbing and weaving through cancelled productions and changes

Humanity and humour: Penny Downie, Dulcie Gray and Anna Carteret star in Peter Hall's timely production of Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*

of cast, but the unplanned revival of Saint-Saëns' grand opera is all gain. Sidney Nolan's sumptuously colourful decor, Eliot Moshinsky's grown-up production and David Bintley's rather saucy Bacchanale – not to mention "Softly awakes my heart" – all add up to a thumping good evening out. *The Greek*, mezzo Markella Hatzianou, sings the tempress. Jose Cura is the prophet, and the expert Jacobs Delacote conducts. *Royal Opera House, Bow St, London WC2 (0171-304 4000), Tues 20 Feb, 7.30pm. £5.*

THE MAGIC FLUTE There are few more uplifting experiences than a really good performance of Mozart's fairy-tale morality, and the English National Opera fields a strong team for the latest revival of Nicholas Hytner's first staging. Alexander Sander's stylish conducting is the perfect springboard for exceptional singing from Janice Watson and fan Bosridge as the very juvenile leads, Peter Snipp as the birdcatcher and John Connell as – in George Bernard Shaw's words – the voice of God. All this, and you can hear the words too. *Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (0171-632 8300), Wed 21, Fri 2, 7.30pm. £5.*

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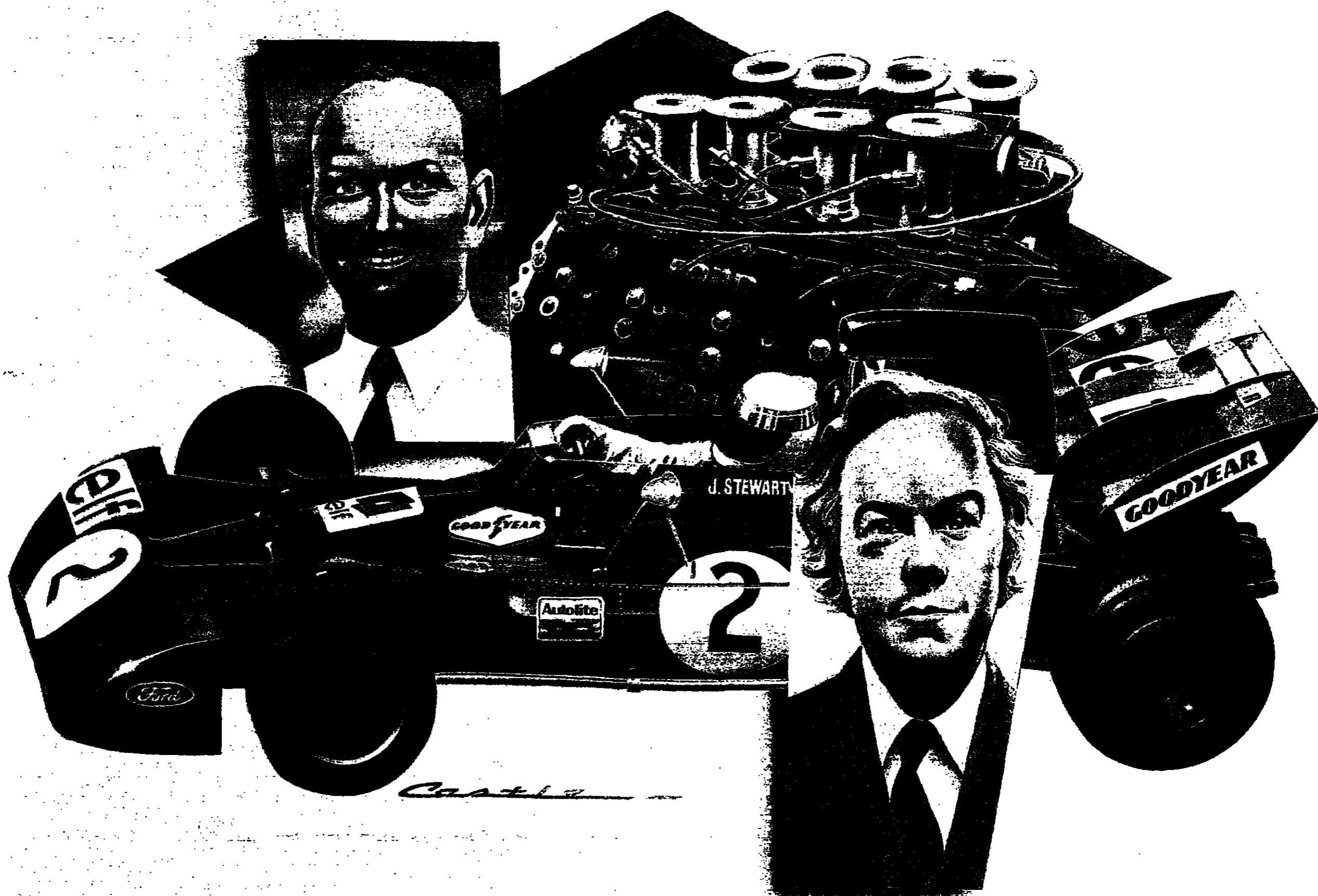
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SATURDAY JANUARY 27 1996

YEAR 96

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu salutes the achievements of Keith Duckworth, whose British-made was best



Power brokers: Mike Costin, left, and Keith Duckworth with their record-breaking DFV engine, which powered Jackie Stewart to the World Drivers' and Constructors' Championship in 1971. Illustration by Philip Castle

Cosworth Engineering of Northampton build racing engines, including the most successful design in grand prix racing history. Between 1967 and 1985 their DFV (DFI) series of 3-litre V8s won no fewer than 151 World Championship qualifying 'grands prix' and powered a dozen Drivers' World Championship winners.

The company was founded in 1958 by two young engineers, Mike Costin and Keith Duckworth. The name combination does not reflect the manner in which Duckworth would play the primary role, but the alternative — Duckin Engineering — was hardly acceptable.

David Keith Duckworth, born in Lancashire in 1933, was educated at Giggleswick School in Yorkshire and Imperial College, London. Graham Robson, in his definitive history of Cosworth Engineering, *The Search for Power*, summed him up as "engineering design genius, workaholic, frustrated helicopter pilot, successful businessman, multi-talented, super-confident, deep-thinking, forthright, stubborn, often combative, dismissive of fools, gregarious in company but dangerous in argument".

In 1952, after National Service

with the RAF, he went to Imperial College. He became interested in motor sport and ordered a Lotus Six kit car from Colin Chapman's embryo company. Due to illness, what should have been a three-year university course occupied four, but he built and briefly raced the Lotus Six and met Mike Costin, the de Havilland aircraft engineer who then became Chapman's technical director at Lotus.

Graduation triggered a job hunt.

Rolls-Royce's interviewers spotted the 24-year-old's "unsuitability to work as part of a team". He fancied the extraordinary engine projects being tackled by Napier, but then he heard that Graham Hill was leaving his Lotus job to try his luck as a professional racing driver. When Chapman offered a post as Lotus's gearbox development engineer, the graduate accepted.

"The Lotus Querbox" has passed into history as a frail and unreliable device. Lotus parsimony prevented Duckworth making it reliable, and

after ten months he was ready to leave. He and Costin recognised their complementary talents; both were interested in "messing about with racing cars and engines". They discussed a joint venture, but Chapman tied Costin to Lotus on a three-year contract which Mike could not refuse.

So Keith went out on his own with Costin initially as a part-time partner — Cosworth Engineering Ltd, being incorporated on September 30 1958. He worked at first in Shafesbury Mews, Kensington, but a move quickly followed to Friern Barnet, North London. Duckworth having bought a second-hand engine test bed which he installed without benefit of planning permission.

A new class of single-seater racing — Formula Junior — gained international recognition in 1959. It demanded production-based engines of no more than 1100cc with limited modification. Through a friend, Duckworth heard of Ford's

forthcoming new 105E engine for the Anglia, which sounded ideal for Junior racing. His prototype Cosworth-Ford FJ unit then made its race debut on Boxing Day, 1959, and at Easter Monday Goodwood 1960, it won its first race, in a new Lotus 18 driven by a young Scot called Jim Clark.

Formula Junior success piled upon success, and the 105E-based Cosworth-Ford engines proved to be the class of the field. Ford of Dagenham approved... intensely. Larger premises ex-Lotsus were found in Edmonton. Duckworth's attention to gas-flow and camshaft profiles perfected the new Lotus-Ford Twin-Cam 4-cylinder engine which made the Lotus-Cortina saloon a race and rally winner.

Upon completion of his Lotus contract, Costin joined in full-time. Two new 1-litre racing classes were due for 1964 — Formula Two permitting heavily modified produc-

tion-based engines and Formula Three allowing only minor tuning. Duckworth took the successful Ford 105E bottom end and created a new cylinder head to form the Cosworth SCA — Single-Cam Series A — F2 engine.

By 1964, a greenfield site was acquired in Northampton which Cosworth Engineering still occupies. New racing Formulae demanded new power units, and Duckworth and his specialist team provided them. When Formula One grew from 1½ to three litres from 1966, Chapman asked Duckworth if he felt capable of creating a new F1 engine. The answer was characteristically positive, and Chapman secured funding from Ford. A new 1600cc Formula Two class was launched in 1967, for which, with Ford backing, Duckworth developed his Four-Valve Series A Cosworth FVA twin-cam engine. The 3-litre Formula One Cosworth-Ford engine followed on for Lotus as the

sioning specialist performance engine work for Chevrolet, Vauxhall and Opel, followed by Mercedes-Benz and other giants. The Chevrolet Cosworth Vega, Ford Escort RS1600, 1700 and 1800, the Sierra RS Cosworth range and 16-valve Mercedes-Benz 190s all emerged with Cosworth technology.

Such immense success was not without cost. Duckworth had suffered a heart attack in 1973 and towards the 1980s he worried for his company's future. He could not contemplate it falling into unsuitable hands should death duties force his family to sell, so he looked for a suitable buyer. He found United Engineering Industries, who took over Cosworth Engineering in 1980.

His first marriage ended in divorce and his heart condition worsened, requiring bypass surgery. In 1988, he retired from the chairmanship of Cosworth Engineering, remarried and remains today the most respected surviving engineer of the British class of the 1960s and 1970s. His genius and "straight-as-a-gunbarrel" example took motor sport by the scruff of the neck. "British is Best" had too often been an empty boast; Duckworth gave it genuine substance.

MARTIN BEDDOE

old bangers already on the road with mismatched parts," laughed Stuart. "It looks like a glamorous ringer."

He has a point; in a few years' time, when it has lost its originality and the N-reg plate is looking dated, the Harlequin may well resemble a car that someone knocked together from a heap of scrapped Polos.

Ann concedes it is "the only car I've ever seen that looks colourful on a miserable January day". And Ian admits that he had "never looked at a Polo for so long. It's a great marketing gimmick. People just can't take their eyes off it."

Natalie Fraser is definitely not interested in the gaudy little hatchback, but, of course, most teenagers insist on everything being black. So, who is going to buy a car like this? Well it was hard, but I found a Harlequin fan, and once I'd identified her, I found dozens like her. My mum wants one. My best friend's mum wants one, my neighbour's

Helen Mound on a Harlequin that makes people laugh

Red and yellow and pink and green...

Be prepared to be the butt of a thousand jokes when you drive around in Volkswagen's new Polo Harlequin — so named because its body panels are like the classic multi-coloured costume of Columbine's clown lover.

"Put a few dents in your new car then?" snarked the man behind me in the cash-point queue. "You know you can get replacement panels in matching colours." Brave Harlequin drivers will have to grin and bear it.

It seems everyone is affected somehow by the brightly coloured supermini. Schoolkids begin ordering the car in multi-colours, so Volkswagen launched the Harlequin, in

lot, and put their hands over their eyes expressing either dazzlement or disgust. Everyone either loves or loathes this car.

Volkswagen claims there is no shortage of admirers for the Harlequin; it was customer demand that secured its launch. When the new Polo was introduced last year in Germany, the company built a special model with all the different colours that customers could have, a kind of three-dimensional colour-Swatch. Almost immediately, German motorists began ordering the car in multi-colours, so Volkswagen

launched the Harlequin, in

lot, and put their hands over their eyes expressing either dazzlement or disgust. Everyone either loves or loathes this car.



Shades of attraction: Germans — who normally favour dull colours for their cars — fell in love with the Harlequin

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Touring champions put John on the fast track to fame

If John Bintcliffe feels pains between his shoulder blades at night, it's probably because most of Britain's racing drivers are sticking pins into effigies of him.

For this impish 29-year-old has grabbed one of the most coveted seats of the 1996 season: a factory drive with Audi, the world touring car champions, in this year's British Touring Car Championship. His team-mate will be the German world champion Prunk Biela.

Bintcliffe, however, remains undaunted by his high-octane leap from obscurity: "I'm just waiting to get on doing the driving. The impact won't hit me until I pull out of the pit road at Donington Park for qualifying."

That will happen on the weekend of April 8, when the touring car circus starts its 13-round, 26-race championship at the Derbyshire circuit. Bintcliffe's abilities will then come under the scrutiny of up to 90,000 spectators and three million BBC *Grandstand* viewers.

Bintcliffe has endured poverty to achieve success. A panel beater's earnings couldn't fund the traditional racing driver's apprenticeship of karting and competition at racing schools; he was 25 before he had saved enough to get on a starting grid, in a Honda CRX coupe at Silverstone in 1992.

"I didn't know what I was doing. I didn't walk round the circuit before practice, and all I knew of the corners was their shape on the map. I did some stupid do-or-die manoeuvre and spun off. I just wanted to win from the word go."

For 1993 Bintcliffe pulled together £22,000 to fund a car for the national Renault Clio championship. "I rolled the car trying to set the fastest time in the first official test session of the year," he says. "I

feel all my money going 'shwish!'. He escaped with a £4,000 bill for crash repairs, but caused a further £4,500 of damage in the third race of the year by over-revving his engine. "After that I was skint — my budget had been wiped out."

Inspiration came from his father, Barry, who was in hospital suffering from the cancer that was soon to take his life. "I told my dad that I thought I could make it as a racing driver and he said 'If you really think so, just go for it'."

To finance a new season, Bintcliffe sold his possessions, rented out his house and moved into his grandfather's bungalow. The low point of this marginal existence came when he was forced to sell his prized TAG Heuer sportsman's watch for £280 to buy a pair of tyres. But his persistence paid off: he won the 1994 Elf Renault Clio UK Cup and followed this with victory in the Ford Credit Fiesta Championship last year.

He got the Audi job after meeting Richard Lloyd, a former touring car champion and Audi's team co-ordinator, at an endurance race at Snetterton.

Bintcliffe's new job will not be easy. Audi are unique in the BTCC in using four-wheel-drive against front-wheel-drive opposition from Vauxhall, Renault, Ford, Volvo, Honda and Peugeot, and BMW's rear-drive cars. Audi's A4 will therefore have to lug a 65kg weight penalty.

But Bintcliffe points out: "A quick front-wheel-drive car is the hardest thing to drive. All the power, braking and steering inputs are going through the same axle. It makes the cars tend to spin. Four-wheel-drive should let you get away with a lot more."

Mike Nicks on a big break



Bintcliffe: "I'll just get on with the driving"

Alan Copps finds Chrysler Jeep's latest model in the four-wheel-drive market a serious Range Rover rival

A long with Barbour's and green wellies, the big four-wheel-drive has entered our national mythology. Loved by middle-class children to whom it offers a grandstand seat on the school run, the mothers who drive them for that purpose are demonised by commuters everywhere.

If your object is to get from home to office by car in the minimum of time exploiting every centimetre of road space, then the back end of a Range Rover, Frontera, Shogun or Jeep Cherokee might as well be the back end of an articulated lorry: it's difficult to see past and frequently impossible to squeeze past.

Then there are the constant jibes aimed at those younger trendies who buy "fun" off-roaders and never venture away from a tarmac surface just in case they get them dirty. It is estimated that only 30 per cent of 4WD vehicles sold ever get to travel off the road, but still the market in Britain grew by more than 11 per cent last year.

That makes Richard Mackay a happy man. He is managing director of Chrysler Jeep in the UK, whose Cherokee in various guises has been one of the main beneficiaries from the growth in the market. "Think how happy other makers would be if the market overall grew by that amount. In fact, it grew by just 1.8 per cent," he says.

Since resuming sales in Britain three years ago, Chrysler Jeep has sold nearly 15,000 Cherokees, twice the number it predicted, and this week it launched the Austrian-built, 4-litre, all-singing, all-dancing (literally) Grand Cherokee. Bigger, better equipped and better-looking than the smaller Cherokees, with automatic transmission as standard at a price of £28,995, it presents a head-on challenge to the enduring Range Rover.

"We see the Grand Cherokee as a luxury car which happens to have four-wheel-drive," says Mackay, pointing to figures that show that the most popular part exchanges against its smaller cousins have been upmarket saloons such as Mercedes, BMW and Volvo. Climb up into the leather seats and look at the dashboard oozing with electrical equipment and it's not difficult to see the logic in that view.

But Mackay also points out that growth in the market is patchy. "It favours the makers with a four-wheel-drive heritage," he says, clearly placing Jeep at the head of that list, but declining to identify others. Land Rover and Mitsubishi with the strong-selling Shogun must be the most obvious entrants.



When the going gets tough... as Jeep's off-road expert, Barry Stallard's roller coaster includes spectacular descents on loose rocks

The Jeep team was only too anxious to demonstrate how well this luxury car would perform over the rough. If you want to see a Grand Cherokee dance, the man to consult is Barry Stallard, Jeep's off-road expert, whose job consists of devising ever more fiendish things for these vehicles to do. On the fringe of Snowdonia, 1,000ft up, he had marked out a 45-minute off-road course which included a series of spectacular descents on loose

rocks, an underwater roundabout and a flat-out dash up what was probably the steepest slope I have ever climbed in a vehicle.

But the centrepiece of this exercise was something called Stallard's roller coaster, a short rise with bumps, rather like moguls on a ski slope, placed asymmetrically so that every time one wheel rose the other on the same side dropped, frequently twisting at the same time and admirably demonstrating

the virtues of Jeep's Quadra-trac four-wheel-drive system and gas-filled dampers. Watching the car in front climb this slope, the word "dancing" seems appropriate. The climb ends in a pinnacle from which the car virtually stands on its nose as it plunges into a muddy pond and exits just as steeply.

The Grand Cherokee performed all this with great aplomb. But that is the contradiction built into these off-road limousines I can't really

see many owners shelling out £30,000 and then cheerfully listening to the grunch of rocks hitting the sump guard, loose stones flying against the paintwork and watching glutinous mud cling to the door sills ready to smear their clothes.

If you do this sort of thing in earnest, you are probably not too worried about having the leather seats with eight-way power adjustment and two-position memory or the six-speaker stereo system or the automatic air conditioning.

Controls, incidentally, will flick from centigrade to Fahrenheit at the touch of a button, but if you use centigrade the trip recorder and everything else flicks into kilometres, a feature which I predict will produce some interesting generational conflict if you use this as a family car.

The level of standard equipment is so high that there are only two items on the options list: a sunroof and a CD changer. If you enjoy the high driving position of an off-roader, then on the motorway or on the passes of Snowdonia this is a limousine that will transport you in luxury, at speed and with bags of luggage space. Despite the height, it was relatively unaffected by crosswinds and my only niggle would be the positioning of the pedals, the brake being a long way back relative to the throttle.

But if in a few years' time you are tempted to buy a used Grand Cherokee, make sure it was never on the Press fleet. Remember Stallard's roller-coaster.



GRAND CHEROKEE

Body style: 5-door, 5-seat off-roader.
Engine: six-cylinder, four-litre giving 174bhp at 4600rpm.
Transmission: 4-speed auto with high and low ratios and permanent Quadra-Trac 4WD.

Performance: Max speed, 112mph; 0-60mph in 9.9seconds.
Economy: Urban, 13mpg; Extra urban, 23.5mpg; Combined 18.2mpg.

Equipment: Electrically operated seats (with position memory), windows and mirrors. Air conditioning, cruise control, trip computer, six-speaker stereo. Anti-lock brakes, side impact protection, dual airbags, remote central locking and alarm/immobiliser.
Price: £28,995.
Insurance: Group 16.



The dashboard oozes equipment and steep hills are no problem

Honda Shuttle competition

YOU CAN BE the proud owner of a fabulous new Honda Shuttle, the ultimate people carrier, thanks to an exclusive competition in *The Times*. This is the last token, a bonus, for your chance to enter our free prize draw.

All you have to do is post three different tokens with the official entry form which was published in *Car 96* on January 13 and 20 to: *The Times*/Honda Shuttle Prize Draw, 134-146 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3AR.

Closing date for this competition is next Friday, February 2, 1996.



(mazda) > (the rest)

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